The Quality of Life of a Deprived Population Group : Lone Parents in Scotland

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Abstract

This thesis is a multi-method, multi-stage exploration of the quality of lone parent life in Strathclyde, Scotland.

Despite the considerable research effort that has focused on lone parenthood in recent years, there has been no systematic study of the life concerns of lone parents, nor has there been a systematic study of lone parents' assessment of their own lives. Similarly, despite the considerable QoL research efforts of geographers, there has been a lack of work that is based on subject groupings; the majority of studies evaluate the QoL of (all population groups within) a specified geographical area. The thesis sets out to redress both these omissions from existing research.

However, existing interpretations of QoL are found to be flawed. Thus, a new conceptualisation is proposed which accords the concept a specific role in a wider system of understanding; QoL is to be understood as a component of way of life. In turn, QoL comprises of an internal and an external component. That, is QoL research must seek to focus on the subject group (internal QoL) *and* to compare the conditions of living of that subject group to other population groups (external QoL).

In applying this concept to lone parents in Strathclyde, two main strategies were employed. First, deprivation indicators from the 1991 Great Britain Census Of Population are used to compare lone parent households to other households (external QoL). Second, a questionnaire survey is used to canvass lone parent opinion on the quality of their own life (internal QoL). A synthesis of these results, demonstrates that lone parents perceive a higher QoL than standardised deprivation indicators would have predicted. The remainder of the thesis is devoted to explaining why lone parents experience the quality of life that they do.

Geographic, lone parent specific and demographic factors each contribute to an understanding of lone parent QoL. However, socio-economic factors and, in particular, economic status, are the key cleavages among lone parents. Nevertheless, the explanations for QoL are found to vary quite dramatically at the domain level. Simple summations of QoL are thus shown to offer a dangerously misleading account of lone parents' lives. Finally, a time series analysis relates lone parent QoL to changes in their life course; the significance of migration (household formation) is discussed at length.

Together, these insights contribute to a better understanding of lone parenthood. Furthermore, much of the thesis raises issues that pertain directly to lone parent policy debates. The thesis concludes by discussing the policy relevance of its key findings.

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Ever since I arrived, the Department of Geography and Topographic Science made me welcome and provided intellectual stimulus, kind words and material support. I was also extremely lucky to have studied within a postgraduate community that was as committed to each other as they were to their work. I thank you, Lesley, Kenny, David, Al, Davis, George, Darren, Sian, and particularly, Jim and Fiona.

John Findlay, Director of *One-Plus*, was extremely helpful and enthusiastic for the research; one day I hope to repay this debt. More generally, all the staff of *One-Plus* and *Gingerbread* (Glasgow) have helped me enormously. Over 300 lone parents and 160 partnered parents have shared their lives with me. I truly hope my research efforts have made their contribution worthwhile.

Scott offered *that* car on numerous occasions to facilitate my fieldwork and later, with Viv, helped me on my rounds; Scott also drew Figure 4.3. When the data was collected, the Post Office Postcode Translation Service (Glasgow) saved me hours of hard labour by converting postcodes into addresses and the Data Preparation Service of the Computing Department at Glasgow University computerised my database.

Rita & George paid for the printing, binding and posting of the thesis and my dad offered much encouragement from day one, chauffeured me on too many occasions to mention and perhaps most important of all, always reminded me that I had a life beyond the thesis. However, this was a lesson I have too often ignored; Lauren, my daughter, and Corrie, my son, have suffered with a dad who has pre-occupied with work for too long. I thank you for your love and smiles.

I owe a particular debt of gratitude to three people. My mum has always encouraged my academic aspirations and has backed this up with invaluable practical help. I don't really believe that she likes correcting grammar and spelling, or coding questionnaires, or listening to my rants and raves on the same subject for four years, but what I do know is that I am truly grateful for all this and more besides. Long may it continue.

I am especially grateful to Allan Findlay, my long suffering supervisor. Not only I am thankful for his monumental efforts in criticising, encouraging and cajoling, me, with regard to the thesis; over and beyond the call of duty, Allan has been my mentor in carving out an academic career. Belief is everything and you have never doubted my ability; it's always nice to receive praise, but on many an occasion, it was also important.

There was a third person?.... Oh yes, Caroline, my wife, helped too. Caroline's contribution can be summarised in just six words .....

I dedicate this thesis to Caroline

Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an another degree or qualification. However, the material contained within has been presented by the author to several audiences. For five of these presentations, (unpublished) written papers are in circulation among the academic community:

Lone Parenthood and Housing: From Population Geography to Policy
(Swedish/Dutch/British Conference of Population Planning and Policies, University of Umea, Sweden, September 15-18th 1994).

Family Research in Geography: Progress and Prospect
(North West Family Researchers Group, University of Manchester, April 22nd 1994)

Lone Parents, Migration & Quality Of Life
(Postgraduate Research In Population Geography, IBG Annual Conference, University of Nottingham, January 4th 1994).

Applying Quality of Life Research : Lone Parenthood in Scotland
(Postgraduate Forum, IBG Annual Conference, RHNBC, University of London, January 6th 1993).

The Quality of Life of Lone Parents in Scotland
(Scottish Conference for Geography Postgraduates, University of St. Andrews, September 21st 1992).

Material from the thesis has also been circulated outside academia; considerable media interest was generated by the *Lone Parents, Migration & Quality Of Life* paper of January 1994. Key (thesis) findings from this paper were reported in the national (e.g. *Daily Telegraph*, Jan. 4th 1994), regional (e.g. *Manchester Evening News*, Jan. 4th 1994) and local press (e.g. *Shropshire Star*, Jan. 4th 1994). Furthermore, the author participated in a *BBC Radio 4* discussion on lone parents and housing (You & Yours, January 1994) on the basis of the thesis' findings.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 LONE PARENTHOOD IN THE NINETIES

Since the thesis began, two significant 'milestones' in the history of lone parenthood in Britain have been reached. The first of these dates back to 1989, when John Haskey, a demographer with the Office of Population, Census and Surveys (hereafter OPCS) asserted that there were over one million lone parents families in Britain (Haskey 89, using *General Household Survey* data). If there is one single statistic that emphasises the importance of lone parenthood in Britain today, then this, most certainly, is it. A second important 'milestone' was reached during the second week of December in 1992. During this week, each of Her Majesty, the Queen's six grandchildren were living within families headed by a lone parent[1]. Thus, the model of family life to which Britons traditionally aspired, now comprises of lone parent families, estranged parents and re-constituted partnerships. Not so long ago, such a situation would have been unimaginable. Yet today, in the late 20th Century, lone parenthood is experienced throughout the status hierarchy of British society.

It is significant that the former is the only 'milestone' to receive public recognition. Indeed, Haskey's most recent estimate is that there are now 1.3 million lone parents and 2.2 million dependent children living within lone parent families in Britain, or in relative terms, one in every five families with dependent children, are headed by a lone parent (Haskey 93). In terms of crude numbers and population trends, the new-found interest in lone parenthood is entirely justified. However, the failure to acknowledge the second milestone, or more specifically, the general lesson that arises from it, is a telling indication of the manner in which this interest in lone parenthood has been raised in the public arena. The focus of discussion is the problem *of* lone parenthood, not the problems faced by lone parents. As Marina Warner (94) has so succinctly summarised, the conceptualisation of lone parents (single mothers in particular) as monstrous mothers pervades much social discussion of lone parenthood. They are to be feared, despised, derided, curtailed.

However, in the early nineties there is a growing backlash to this negative portrayal. Indeed, there are two bases for approaching the study of lone parenthood, i.e. dependency or deprivation; the emphasis being a reflection on how the discussant is disposed toward lone parents. *Dependency* is the basis for much discussion that seeks to attack lone parenthood, with the growing numbers of lone parents on State welfare being a rallying call for punitive fiscal interventions. Quite simply, give less (benefit), get less (lone parents). *Deprivation* is the basis for discussion that supports (not promotes) lone parents. The 'problem' is not perceived as of the individual's making, rather, the root of the problem lies with wider societal constraints that function against lone parents. The thesis has no truck with social commentary that aims to attack lone parents. However, neither is the thesis a counter-argument that aims to defend them at all costs. Rather, the thesis is concerned to offer a voice to 'the (lone parent) Other'. This criticism is also a valid one to make against academic studies; as Philo (94) has argued, academic discourse tends to be elitist, imposing the perspectives of the

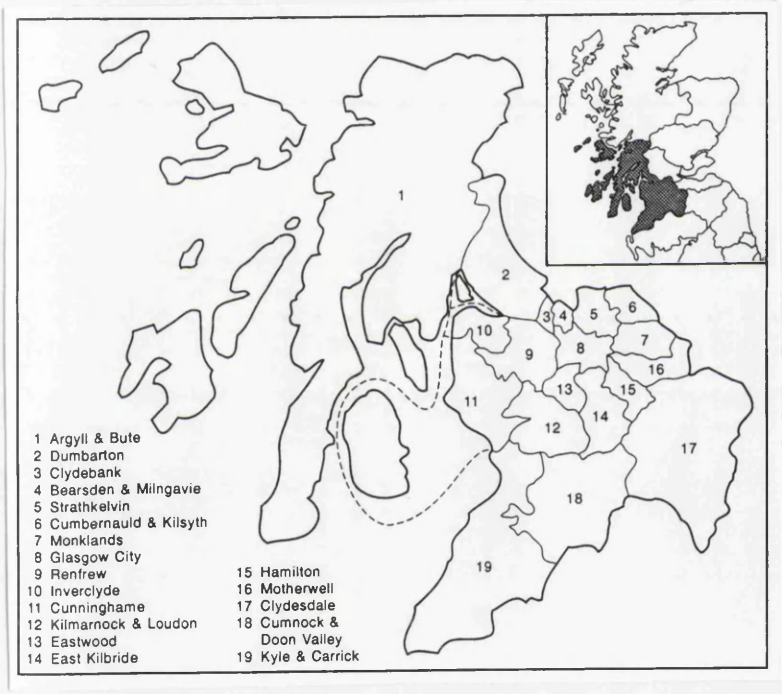
author upon the subject matter. At its most basic, the thesis offers the means for lone parents to assess their own situation (their quality of life), then rationalises these self-assessments against the reality of lone parent deprivation.

1.2 THE STUDY AREA

Strathclyde Region provides the geographical context within which the research is set. As Figure 1.1 shows, Strathclyde is situated in the west coast of Scotland in North Britain. It is a regional administrative unit with a population of more than two million people distributed across nineteen district councils, 375 settlements and 13, 537 km^2.

Figure 1.1

Study Area: Strathclyde In Its National Context



Source: McKendrick (94)

However, the reasons why Strathclyde is such a suitable context for the current research lie beyond these key statistics. The aim of the thesis is to look at the quality of life of a deprived group; on a national scale, Strathclyde and deprivation could be regarded as synonymous. This relationship dates back to Holterman's (75) classic study of urban deprivation in Britain that cast the Clydeside conurbation in Strathclyde in such a poor light vis-à-vis other urban conurbations. One key aspect of the deprivation in Strathclyde was its spatial concentration. Thus, examining deprivation (or any deprivation related theme) in Strathclyde affords for additional (geographical) lines of enquiry to be pursued.

Furthermore, the local authorities within Strathclyde are committed to tackling deprivation. In general, this makes for a dynamic situation in which the context of deprivation changes through time (and space). This, in itself, is interesting, but it also implies that the results of the thesis are more likely to taken aboard by the local agencies that are responsible for anti-poverty strategies. Indeed, one of the motivations for researching lone parents arose from a statement made in Strathclyde Regional Council's *Social Strategy For The Eighties*:

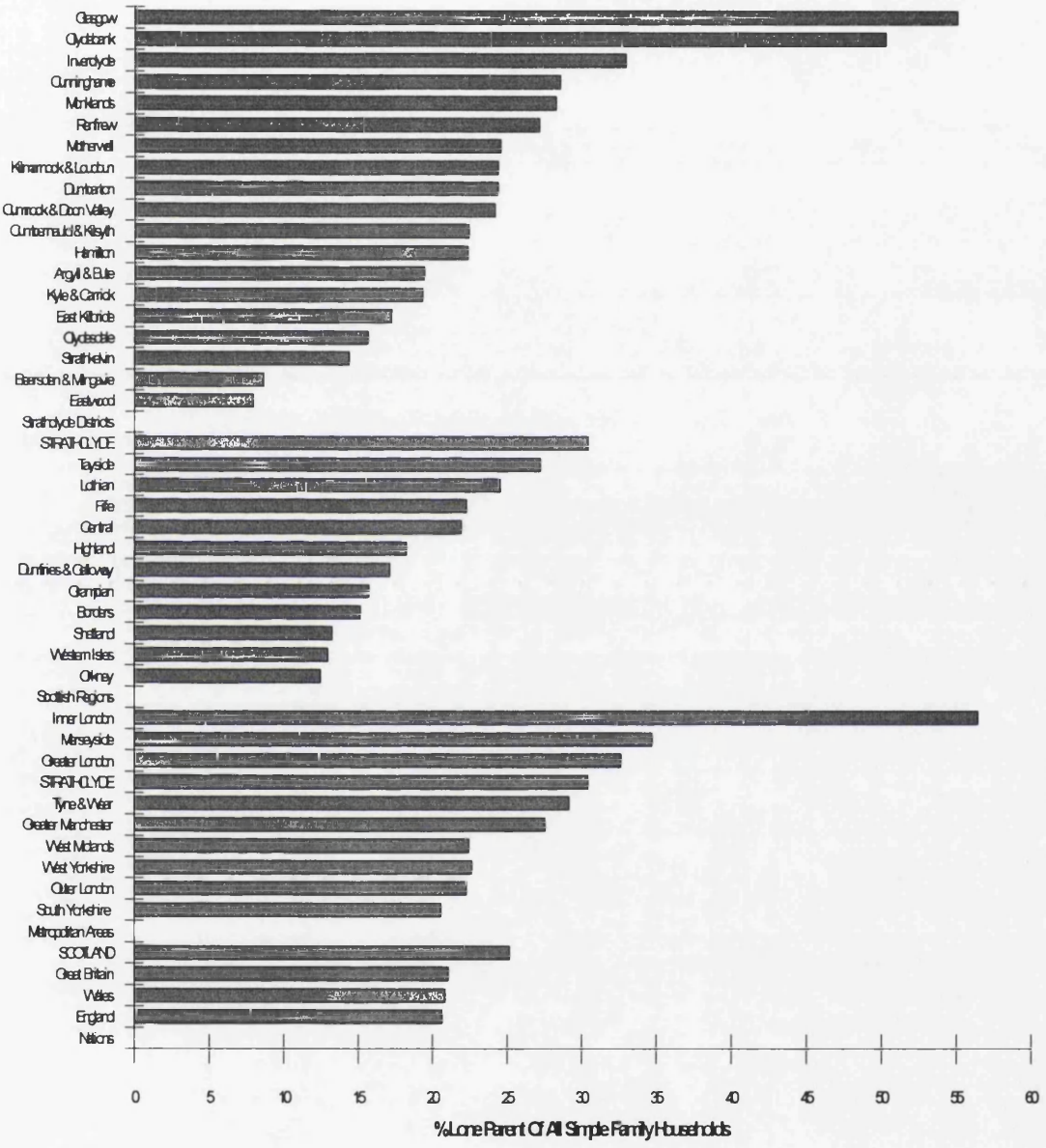
> *" ... there has been no general attempt to look at the needs of single parents and numerous comments made to the Council have supported the establishment of a member/officer type investigation into the needs of and services for single parents. "*
>
> (S.R.C. 1984, p.41)

The thesis is an attempt to address this important gap in knowledge. However, local authorities are not the only institution to recognise the plight of lone parents in Strathclyde. Rather, there is a network of voluntary self-help organisations concerned with the conditions of lone parent living in Strathclyde Region; for example, the *One-Plus* network is a region-wide organisation consisting of over ninety local lone parent support groups. As for the local authorities, these voluntary institutions will ensure that the thesis' findings are applied to useful ends. The potential for applying the research findings is not the only reason why Strathclyde is such a suitable location in which to pursue the research; the commitment to tackling deprivation, in general, and lone parent deprivation, in particular, means that resources for research (literature, background information, statistical overviews) would be readily available.

A final set of reasons underlying the selection of Strathclyde Region concerns its geography of lone parenthood. Figure 1.2 is a multi-scale comparison of the incidence of lone parenthood in Strathclyde Region and beyond. The illustration shows that lone parenthood is more prevalent in Scotland (compared to England and Wales), in Strathclyde compared to all other regions in Scotland, and in Strathclyde compared to most other metropolitan boroughs in England. Thus, Strathclyde is a part of Britain in which lone parenthood is relatively more important. However, the upper half of Figure 1.2 also shows that Strathclyde is not a homogeneous area; on the contrary, there are marked variations in the prevalence of lone parents in the local districts within Strathclyde. Thus, research based in Strathclyde offers the opportunity to research lone parents from areas where they comprise less than ten per cent of all simple family households[2] (Eastwood) to areas where one in every two simple family households are headed by a lone parent (Glasgow). Furthermore, the geographical cleavages extend beyond the proportional incidence of lone parents; the districts of Strathclyde comprise city, peri-urban, old de-industrialising, New Town, commuter and rural settlements (Pacione 85). In summary Strathclyde offers a rich context for geographical inquiry; Figure 1.3 demonstrates that the potential this afforded was capitalised upon, i.e. the research was conducted in many different (types of) place within the Region.

Figure 1.2

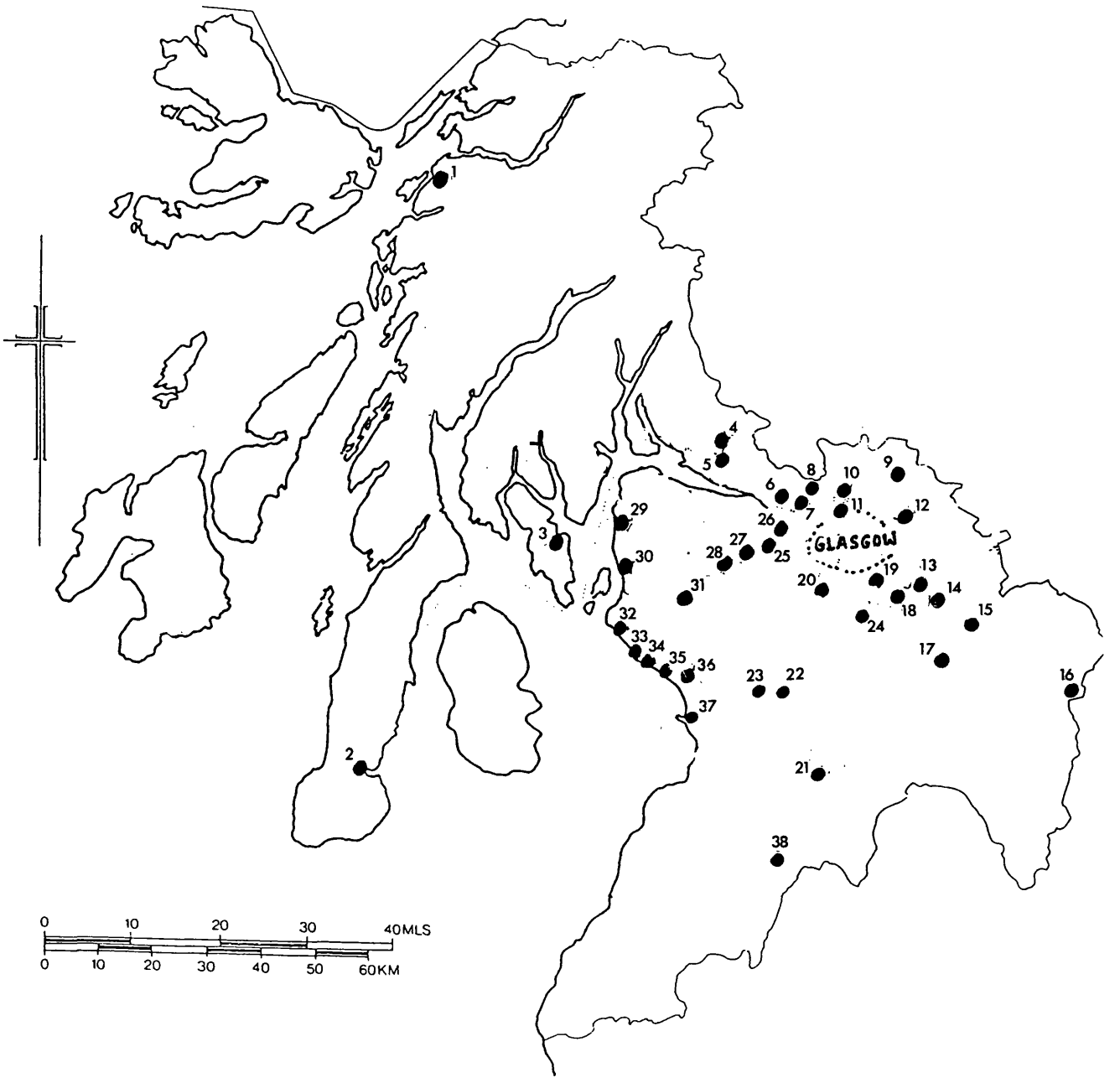
Incidence Of Lone Parenthood: Strathclyde Region And Beyond



Source: Registrar General Scotland (1993a, Table 42), OPCS (1993a, Table 42)

Figure 1.3a

Research Locations Within Strathclyde Region : Outside Glasgow



Legend

1	Oban	9	Kilsyth	17	Blackwood	25	Paisley	33	Ardrossan
2	Campbeltown	10	Kirkintilloch	18	Hamilton	26	Inchinnan	34	Saltcoats
3	Rothesay	11	Bishopbriggs	19	Blantyre	27	Johnstone	35	Stevenston
4	Alexandria	12	Airdrie	20	Busby	28	Millinkenpark	36	Irvine
5	Bonhill	13	Motherwell	21	Cumnock	29	Skelmorlie	37	Troon
6	Faifley	14	Wishaw	22	Galston	30	Largs	38	Bellsbank
7	Bearsden	15	Carluke	23	Kilmarnock	31	Kilbirnie		
8	Milngavie	16	Carnwath	24	East Kilbride	32	West Kilbride		

Table 1.1
Areas For Priority Treatment
: Family & Household Character In The
APTs With Highest And Lowest Proportion Of Lone Parents

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Riccarton	42.2	1.6	40.4	16.0	(88)	75	27
2	Ferguslie Park	38.8	1.9	35.6	41.9	(14=)	84	348
3	Cranhill	37.9	1.7	36.2	37.4	(44=)	37	347
4	Ruchill	37.4	1.6	32.8	43.4	(11)	59	195
5	Foxbar	36.3	1.7	34.7	58.1	(1)	85	173
6	Gorbals/Oatlands	36.3	1.3	33.2	19.4	(85)	45	377
7	Greater Possil	35.6	1.6	32.1	32.9	(60=)	48	567
8	Haghill	34.9	1.5	31.9	32.4	(62)	49	175
9	Germiston	34.4	1.4	31.4	23.6	(84)	44	72
10	Drumchapel	34.6	1.7	30.9	40.2	(28)	38	1094
78	Cambuslang : West	14.1	1.8	13.7	43.6	(9)	33	34
79	Larkfield	14.0	1.9	14.0	40.0	(29=)	81	90
80	Newmains	12.7	1.7	11.9	37.6	(47)	25	86
81	Eastfield	12.2	1.7	12.0	35.1	(54)	22	24
82	Croy	11.7	2.0	13.3	29.4	(69=)	6	15
83	Kirkwood	11.1	1.7	9.7	38.9	(37)	15	78
84	Townhead	11.0	1.7	9.6	40.0	(29=)	19	71
85	Plains	10.6	1.5	8.5	38.5	(34=)	18	36
86	Greenhead	9.3	1.8	8.7	33.2	(59)	24	26
87	East Poll'Shields	6.8	1.9	5.1	40.9	(22)	40	38
88	East Woodlands	5.8	2.1	5.1	36.9	(47)	41	8

Source : Strathclyde Regional Council (1991)
Key : A - Rank order of C.
B - A.P.T.
C - Proportion of households consisting of 1 adult and at least child under the age of 16 (hereafter, lone parent households and dependent children, respectively) of all households with dependent children.
D - Average number of dependent children in lone parent household
E - Proportion of dependent children in lone parent households of all dependent children.
F - Proportion of households that contain dependent children
G - Rank order of F
H - Strathclyde Regional Council A.P.T. identifier
I - Number of lone parent households

These geographical cleavages are even more apparent at the local scale. Indeed, there are even marked variations in the geography of lone parenthood between different *areas of deprivation* within Strathclyde (the so-called Areas For Priority Treatment [APT] of Strathclyde Region). As Table 1.1 shows the proportion of *households* headed by a lone parent ranges from one-in-every twenty in East Woodlands (part of Glasgow) to two-in-every five in Riccarton (part of Kilmarnock - see Figure 1.3). The geography of lone parenthood is rich and complex, thus affording considerable opportunity for geographical insights to be drawn from the research investigation.

1.3 INTRODUCING THE CORE CONCEPTS

1.3.1 LONE PARENTS

The specification of lone parents is fraught with difficulty. In particular, three problems often arise:

1) *Dependent Versus Non-Dependent Children:* A fundamental characteristic of a lone parent family is the responsibility of the lone parent for at least one dependent child. The definition of a dependent child varies markedly between nations (Ermich 91, p.24-50). The definition adopted in the thesis is that which is now typically used in Great Britain, i.e. a dependent child is one aged under 16, or between 16 and 18 and in full-time education. Of course, any crude specification of dependency based on age is likely to be problematic for some cases, e.g. a lone parent responsible for a mentally disabled son of 24 years, clearly has more of a dependent child than a lone parent with one child aged 17 and sitting examinations at school. Yet, it would be the latter who would be classified as a lone parent. Nevertheless, it is widely agreed (and currently accepted) that this is the most satisfactory definition of a dependent child.
2) *Lone Parent Households, Concealed Lone Parent Families in Households & Lone Parent Families:* These terms cannot be used inter-changeably. Lone parent household refers to a situation where the lone parent is the only head of household (while in theory this household could comprise of the lone parent family and an adult lodger, most typically this refers to a household one adult [the lone parent] and dependent children). Concealed lone parent household refers to a situation where the lone parent is not head of household and is sharing accommodation with others. Lone parent families refers to both arrangements. In the thesis, some differences between concealed lone parent families and lone parent households are discussed in 8.3.3. This contribution to the thesis is particularly important given that the primary data used in the thesis refers to lone parent families, while the secondary data is based on lone parent households.
3) *Semantics: Lone, Single or One?* Throughout the paper, the term lone parent is used. Single parent is increasingly being rejected by welfare professionals and academics due to the stigma perpetuated by the use of this term. Perhaps of greater significance to population geographers is that 'single parents' is demographically ambiguous as a generic term, i.e. in terms of marital status, a single parent (never-married) is only one of four categories (the others being divorced, separated and widowed).

Thus, the thesis is concerned with lone parent families with dependent children. Due to the problem of data availability, the comparative insights of secondary data analysis, generally refer to lone parent households. Where this has a bearing on the results, this is acknowledged in the text.

1.3.2 QUALITY OF LIFE

" (The mission of the ESRC is..) to promote and support high-quality basic, strategic and applied social science research ... to increase the understanding of social and economic change ... placing special emphasis on enhancing the UK's industrial competitiveness and ***quality of life"***

(ESRC 1993, p.1, ***emphasis*** added)

Quality of life lies at the heart of the agenda of social scientists in Britain. However, the specification of quality of life as a key focus for research has only served to increase the misunderstanding and misuse of the concept. Quality of life is a catch-all phrase now employed by academics to justify the relevance of their work and its deservedness of research funding.

In the thesis, the deployment of quality of life has a quite specific meaning. As is discussed at greater length in 3.3.2a, the specification of quality of life used in the thesis is a modification of Besthuzhev-Lada's formulation of 1980. That is, quality of life is understood as an evaluation of the gratification derived from needs satisfaction. Several important issues arise from this interpretation:

1) *Internal & External Quality of Life:* Quality of life (hereafter QoL) does not merely refer to the self-assessment of individuals (estimation of the extent to which their needs are being satisfied). Rather, it goes beyond self-assessment and situates these within a broader context (*evaluates* the self-expressed estimation of satisfaction by *way of comparison* against other population groups). This broader context is referred to in the thesis as an *external* assessment of QoL - as opposed to the subject's interpretation, which is known as the *internal* assessment of QoL. This external measure is based on readily available standardised data from which lone parents can be compared to other groups in society. Thus, external QoL moves beyond the opinions of lone parents and beyond the immediate lifeworld of lone parents; the internal QoL assessment focuses on the immediate lifeworld of lone parents as expressed through their self-assessments. Rationalising these two perspectives on QoL is the raison d'être of this conceptualisation.
2) *Definition & Evaluation:* Each component (both internal QoL & external QoL) requires that the QoL criteria are first defined and, once defined, are evaluated empirically. There is a tendency to ignore the need to define QoL in the first instance. In the thesis, defining QoL is accorded equal importance to measuring QoL. Most importantly, provisions were made for lone parents to define what were the key aspects of their life (which formed the basis for the internal QoL self-assessments).
3) *Level Of Quality Of Life:* QoL can be measured for life as whole, for specific domains of life (e.g. housing) or for specific sub-domains (e.g. physical condition of housing). A multi-level approach to QoL is pursued in the thesis. This maximises the insights afforded by the research.

The key components of the thesis have been introduced, this minimises the likelihood of misinterpretation in the research goals. However, a more succinct statement of what the research aims to achieve is necessary. Thus, this introduction to the thesis concludes by specifying the key

research questions and by outlining where these will be addressed within the thesis. First however, brief commentary is made regarding the tools employed in the course of the research.

1.4 INTRODUCING THE THESIS

1.4.1 RESEARCH TOOLS

The thesis is a multi-scale analysis of lone parents' QoL. It comprises of four stages, i.e. *basic grounding* (where the objective is to gain an awareness of the key research issues), *exploratory QoL phase* (where the objective is to explore the QoL of lone parents), *focused QoL phase* (where the objective is to focus on the key aspects of lone parents' QoL that were identified in the previous stage) and *policy application* (where the objective is to discuss the potential for applying the main conclusions of the thesis in the policy arena).

The thesis is also multi-method in character. That is, it employs personal interviews, survey questionnaires, secondary data analysis, time-space diaries and bibliographic analytical techniques in a coherent integrated framework (Figure 4.1). However, two of these methods are of particular importance.

First, *secondary data analysis* is used to estimate the *external QoL* of lone parents vis-à-vis other groups in society. The 1991 G.B. Census Of Population is the best resource for such inquiry. A multi-scale appraisal (intra-district, national) of deprivation indicators (e.g. car ownership, home ownership, housing amenities, health, availability of housing space) are applied to these ends (chpt. 6). The population under consideration are lone parent households with dependent children in Strathclyde Region.

Second, *questionnaire survey analysis* is used to estimate the *internal QoL* of lone parents. The remit of the questionnaire survey is wide-ranging (see 4.4.1), but at its core lies a concern to specify the importance to lone parents of (fourteen) different life concerns, followed by an appraisal of the extent to which lone parents are satisfied with each. The population under consideration is lone parent families with dependent children in Strathclyde Region; the opinions of 275 lone parents provide the basis for this discussion.

These are the means through which knowledge can be generated. The key questions that the thesis aims to address are now specified.

1.4.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

There are seven main issues that the thesis aims to address; three of these pertain to the concept of QoL, four to the empirical subject matter (the QoL of lone parents).

First, the thesis seeks to *devise a meaningful basis for internal QoL analysis.* Much QoL research has been criticised for evaluating subject groups on criteria that is inapplicable to their lives. In contrast, the thesis will use a multi-stage, multi-method strategy to ensure that the criteria used by lone parents to assess their QoL are relevant to the concerns of this population.

Second, the thesis aims to *devise a coherent model for QoL research.* The means by which this will be achieved was alluded to in the previous section. That is, the framework for QoL research that will be developed in the thesis involves the self-assessments of the subject group (internal QoL) and a researcher-led assessment of the conditions of the subject group vis-à-vis other groups (external QoL).

Third, the thesis aims to further *understanding of the relationship between different components of QoL.* As yet, the relationships between definition & evaluation of QoL and between the multiple additive assessment of overall QoL and the single measure model of overall QoL are not yet fully understood. The empirical data collected through the Lone Parent Quality Of Life questionnaires provides the means to engage with these fundamental conceptual issues.

These then are the key issues to be addressed on the theoretical plane. Additionally, there are four empirical issues that the thesis sets out to examine.

First, and as the title of the thesis suggests, the thesis aims to *specify and explain the quality of life of a population group (lone parents) that are widely recognised to be deprived.* What is the relationship between lone parents' self assessments and lone parents' relative deprivation status in society? Exploring the disjuncture between these complementary perspectives of QoL is central to an understanding of the conditions of lone parent living.

Second, the thesis sets out to *disaggregate QoL and to explore the cleavages among the lone parent population.* Too much QoL research focuses on the aggregate conclusion for the generic group, thereby ignoring the complexity of QoL below this level. Yet, it is at these very levels where there is greatest potential for improving the lot of lone parents (or any other subject group). The object is not merely to demonstrate the complexity of lone parent QoL; rather, it is to develop the potential for more policy interventions at more specific levels.

Third, the thesis aims to *specify the key determinants of lone parents' QoL.* It follows from the previous point, that different determinants will be apply for different domains and that the same group of lone parents may exhibit widely differing experiences of QoL for different domains. In the first instance therefore, the key determinants will be domain specific; however, the object of this exercise is not to move away from general conclusion; on the contrary, the aim is to draw general

conclusions from these multi-dimensional insights. It is a synthesis of parts, rather than a summation from the whole.

Finally, the thesis aims to *relate the changes in QoL to life course changes.* Lone parents are a particularly appropriate group for such analysis. That is, all lone parents will have undergone at least one major life change in the recent past (becoming a lone parent). Some will have experienced additional life changes, e.g. becoming a *parent*, migrating to a new residential area on becoming a lone parent. All familial and migration life course changes will be examined with respect to QoL in a temporal analysis.

These then are the key issues the thesis sets out to examine. Within each, there are a series of sub-hypotheses to be addressed and there are also lesser goals beyond this agenda. The place of these key issues (and other important research questions) are now discussed as the organisation of the thesis is set forth.

1.4.3 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The thesis is organised into two four sections; an introduction (chapter one), the research foundations (chapters two-five), the quality of life analysis (chapters six-ten) and a conclusion (chapter eleven).

Chapters two and three share the same objectives. That is, to review existing knowledge on the core concerns of the thesis (lone parenthood in Britain and quality of life), giving particular attention to the geographical contributions to knowledge (2.2 & 3.2); to suggest areas of research potential and to develop a research agenda for the thesis based on the gaps in current understanding. The internal organisation of these chapters differs, with the lone parent literature being thematically-based (reviewing demographic [2.3], socio-economic [2.4], lone parent family life [2.5] and policy debates [2.6]), while the quality of life literature review is more structural by nature (reviewing the concept [3.3.2], the methodological approaches [3.3.3] and the application of results [3.3.4].

Chapter four sets forth the manner in which QoL is interpreted within the thesis. First, a philosophical account of QoL is undertaken (4.1), before the multi-method and multi-stage framework of the thesis is discussed (4.2). Attention is then turned to discuss the methodological tools employed within the thesis (4.3 & 4.4); of particular importance, is the assessment of whether the lone parent survey population is representative of the wider lone parent population, i.e. whether the thesis is of wider significance. Finally, the analytical techniques employed to understand the empirical data are discussed in 4.5.

Chapter five introduces the lone parent population in Strathclyde and the lone parent survey population. The aim is not only to describe; rather, the chapter facilitates an understanding of lone parents' QoL by understanding the lone parent population. The chapter also marks the transition from introduction to analysis within the thesis. First, lone parents are compared to partnered parents to assess the extent to which the lone parent population is unique (5.2). The analysis is conducted at two geographical scales, i.e. in Britain (5.2.1) and within areas of similar character within

Strathclyde Region, i.e. controlling for geographical variation (5.2.2). Second, the geography of lone parenthood is discussed (5.3). Once again, this analysis is multi-scale by structure, i.e. Strathclyde's lone parent population is compared to the lone parent population in the rest of Scotland and the rest of Britain (5.3.1), variations among the Strathclyde population across the districts of Strathclyde Region are discussed (5.3.2) and finally variations between lone parents in/out areas of deprivation are outlined (5.3.3). Finally, an attempt is made to move beyond basic profile characteristics as a means of understanding the lone parent survey population (5.4). A key contribution of this section is the construction of multi-variate typologies of lone parents according to, for example, socio-economic and demographic status.

In *chapter six*, the QoL analysis begins with an examination of the external and internal bases of QoL. First, the (external) QoL of lone parents in Britain is compared to that of other household and family types (6.2). Second, the (external) geography of lone parents' QoL is assessed in the national (6.3.1a) and intra-Strathclyde contexts (6.3.1b); an additional insight that is discussed is the extent to which lone parents have a relatively poorer quality of life compared to two parent families across the district councils of Strathclyde (6.3.2). Having outlined the external QoL of lone parents, attention is turned to the internal QoL, i.e. the survey responses (6.4). A summary of the opinions of lone parents for various aspects of QoL is outlined. Finally, the chapter concludes by considering the inter-relationship between the internal and external QoL results and, on the basis of these conclusions outlines a research agendas for the remainder of the thesis which explores the perspective of lone parents in greater depth.

Chapter seven assesses the validity of the concept of lone parent QoL. This is approached in two ways. First, the internal validity of the concept is assessed (7.2 & 7.3), i.e. to what extent do lone parents share the same outlook on/experience of QoL? The possibility that a more appropriate line of enquiry would be to consider sub-groups of lone parent is the key issue that is addressed. Thereafter, the external validity of the concept is assessed (7.4), i.e. to what extent do the QoL opinions of lone parents differ to those of partnered parents? Do the thesis results reflect a *lone parent* QoL or a *parental* QoL?

Having justified the concept of a lone parent QoL in chapter seven, *chapter eight* begins to explain why lone parents experience the QoL that they do. Initially, the inter-relationships between components of QoL at domain level (8.2.1) and between different measures of overall QoL (8.2.2) are discussed. This suggests that the search for explanation is not complicated by structural relations between QoL components, i.e. the QoL opinions are valid. The search for explanation is conducted across domain importance, domain satisfaction and overall QoL for each sub-type of lone parent. Socio-economic differences are discussed in 8.3.1, followed by demographic (8.3.2), geographical (8.3.3) and lone parent-specific differences in 8.3.4. Following on from this bivariate analysis, *chapter nine* is concerned with the final multivariate explanations for QoL. A key concern is to specify which associations described in chapter eight have explanatory power. Explanations are provided for QoL at the domain level (importance and satisfaction) and overall QoL.

Finally, an attempt is made to move beyond the basic QoL insights to examine how QoL can be applied to specific issues. Thus, *chapter ten* considers life course changes and the patterns of lone parent QoL. First, the changes in QoL, experienced and expected, are explained in 10.3. Thereafter, one particular life change is examined in depth, i.e. migration (10.4). After specifying which lone parents are more likely to migrate (10.4.1), migration and QoL (10.4.2) and lone parenthood and migration (10.4.3) are each discussed.

Notes

1. This began on the Tuesday with the separation of Prince Charles and Princess Diana and ended on the Saturday when Princess Anne married Commander Tim Lawrence. Prince Andrew and Princess Sarah ended the week as it has begun ... with separate living arrangements.

2. Simple family households refer to those households consisting of one family unit and no others, i.e. they are either lone parent households, or two parent [male & female] households. As it is not possible to infer whether households of two men/women with children are a single family unit (gay parents/lesbian parents), only two parents of different sexes are counted.

CHAPTER TWO

LONE PARENT LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION : CROSS-DISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES

In 1988, 'single-parent families' was introduced as a subject heading in the *Sociological Abstracts* journal. For lone parent researchers, such innovations improve the efficiency of literature searches. However, this has symbolic significance, in addition to its practical utility; that is, it is indicative of the growing interest from academia in lone parent issues. This burgeoning stock of lone parent research necessitates that any literature review of lone parenthood is selective. Given the geographical basis of the thesis, particular (but not exclusive) attention is paid to lone parenthood in Britain. Demographic characteristics are reviewed in 2.3. Thereafter, the socio-economic disadvantages experienced by lone parents are discussed (2.4) in terms of income, maintenance and housing status. This is followed by a review of attitudinal research in 2.5. Finally, the key positions in contemporary lone parent policy debates are summarised in 2.6. However, the level of research interest and the focus of concern varies across disciplines. Therefore, more introductory comment is required regarding the disciplinary basis of lone parent research; this disciplinary focus will be continued in the first section of the review proper, when specific attention is given to geographical research on lone parenthood (2.2).

Since 1980, over 300 psychological articles have addressed aspects of lone parenthood. Similarly, since 1988, over 100 sociological articles have addressed lone parent issues. In contrast, geographical studies are much rarer; indeed, fewer than one dozen articles on lone parents were published in geographical journals during the 1970's and 1980's (see 4.3.2b for an explanation of how disciplinary research levels are estimated).

As is to be expected given the volume of the *cumulative* academic literature, a wide range of issues have been addressed for lone parents in a variety of personal, social and spatial contexts. For example, health (e.g. Hanson 86), media portrayal of single parents (e.g. Griffith 86), child behaviour (e.g. Livingston 86), life cycle transitions (e.g. Hill 86), moral issues (e.g. Linn 91) and time-use (e.g. Peters & Haldemann 87) are among the themes that have been addressed. Work has focused on the children (e.g. Peters & Haldemann 87), the lone parent (e.g. Linn 91), the lone parent family as a unit (e.g. Hill 86), the interactions between members of the lone parent family (e.g. Livingston 86) and the interactions between members of the lone parent family unit and others (e.g. Tietjen 85). Work has been undertaken with different types of lone parent e.g. single mothers (e.g. Jones 87), single fathers (e.g. Coney & MacKey 89), homosexual parents (e.g. Turner et al 90), and for families with children of different ages, e.g. pre-school (e.g. Zastowny & Lewis 89), primary school age (e.g. Rose 92) and adolescents (e.g. Mutchler et al 91). Studies have been conducted throughout the developed world e.g. in North America (e.g. Rose & Le Bourdais 86), Scandinavia (e.g. Demidov 85), mainland Europe (e.g. Albino 86), and Australasia (e.g. Cass & O'Loughlin 85). Fewer studies have been undertaken within the underdeveloped world, although, for example, Indonesian (e.g. Hetler 88), Indian (e.g. Bharat 86) and Mexican (e.g. Chant 85) research has been

published. In the developed world most work has an urban focus, although some rural research has been undertaken (e.g. Pines 86).

Within each disciplinary tradition, there are a number of key research themes. Both the sociological and the psychological literature are strongly concerned with the social support network available to lone parents (e.g. Zastowny & Lewis 89; Hogan 90), parenting (e.g. Turner et al 90; Tietjen 85) and socio-economic character (e.g. Pakizegi 90; Schnayer & Orr 88). Additionally, psychological research is particularly concerned with social work intervention strategies (e.g. Kissman 91) and lone parents' adjustment to their family status (e.g. Friedmann & Andrews 90). Sociologists have also been particularly concerned with the academic achievement of children from lone parent families (e.g. Marsh 90) and with economic & welfare matters (e.g. McLanahan & Booth 89).

Lone parenthood has also been studied and discussed beyond academia. Three types of agency are particularly important in this respect. First, over and above their supportive function (on toward individual lone parent families and local groups), *lone parent organisations* have contributed to knowledge by organising conferences and publishing the proceedings. Issues addressed include childcare (e.g. Gingerbread Northern Ireland 91), housing (e.g. One Plus & Shelter 88) and maintenance (e.g. National Council For One Parent Families 89).

Of course, many of lone parents' concerns are shared with others. Consequently, research conducted by *welfare organisations* often focuses on issues which are relevant to lone parents. The Child Poverty Action Group (e.g. Bennett & Chapman 90) and the Family Policy Studies Centre (e.g. Bradshaw 89; Burghes 91) are two of the most prominent commentators on lone parent issues.

Government interest in lone parenthood has become pre-occupied with the payment of maintenance from the absent parent to the lone parent family (Department of Social Security 90). Previously, government interest was more wide-ranging; the Finer Committee (74a: 74b) was established in the early 1970's to examine all lone parent issues, particularly that of lone parent poverty. Nevertheless, despite making over 200 policy recommendations, the report of the Committee led to very little by way of policy changes and the central recommendation for a single, non-contributory pension for all lone parents was not implemented. Indeed, Millar & Bradshaw (87) suggest that the very comprehensiveness and breadth of the Finer report served to dampen research interest in lone parents for the remainder of the 1970's.

As the opening paragraph of this section demonstrates, the 1980's have witnessed a recovery in lone parent research. Academia, Government and non-governmental institutions have each contributed to a greater understanding of lone parenthood. This knowledge is now reviewed, starting with the research tradition which lies at the heart of the thesis, i.e. the geography of lone parenthood.

2.2 GEOGRAPHY OF LONE PARENTHOOD

" Hopefully as the analysis of household change, as one of the most significant aspects of population change, grows in momentum, population geographers will pay more attention to female-headed households and in particular to the geography of single parent households."

(Findlay 92, p.95)

Geography has been slow to focus attention on lone parenthood. There are indications that this is set to change; recognition of the need for more research (such as that of Findlay, above); discussion of the practical problems faced when interviewing lone parents (Winchester 92); evidence of current research (Duncan 92) and an interest from the next generation of geographers (Hastie 93; Hill 93) are all encouraging signs. However, there is more to the geography of lone parenthood than prospect; significant progress has already been made.

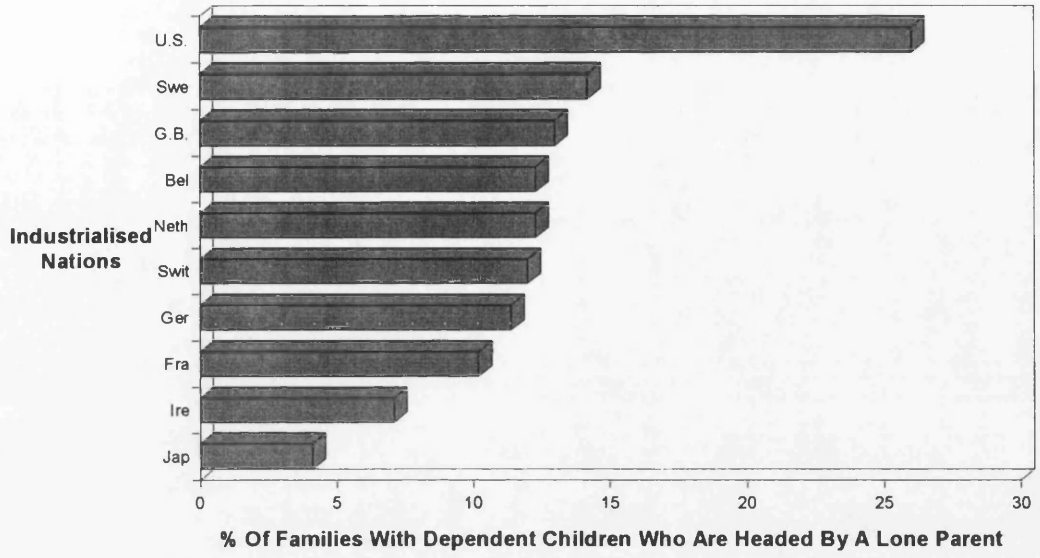
2.2.1 SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

Several international studies of lone parenthood have been undertaken; Roll (89; 92) has considered trends in the European Community (hereafter, E.C.), O'Higgins (87) and Ermisch et al (90) examined Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (hereafter, O.E.C.D.) countries; while Ermisch (91) compared industrialised nations. As Ermisch (91) reports, the incidence of lone parenthood in the UK is comparable to that of most Western industrialised nations (c13% or one-in-six of all families with dependent children in the mid-1980s). Only Japan and Ireland (far below the European average), and the U.S.A. (far above the European average) diverge markedly from this norm (Figure 2.1). However, as Ermisch (91, p.5) recognises, caution should be exercised when comparing national rates, as the definition of a lone parent family varies from one nation to the next. Cross national comparisons are less problematic when they involve a limited number of countries. One such exercise was recently administered by the French Institut National d'Etudes Demograpiques (I.N.E.D.) comparing lone parenthood in the Soviet Republics & France (e.g. Kiseleva & Sinel'Nikov 92). This was part of a broader project comparing demographic change between 'East' and 'West'. A sharp rise in the number of single parent families in the Soviet Republics was demonstrated to have coincided with the break-up of the Soviet Union.

Several national studies of lone parenthood have been undertaken e.g. for Canada (McKee 92), France (Thumerelle & Momont 88) and Britain (Bradshaw & Millar 91). Within these national studies of lone parenthood, geographical variation within has been neglected or ignored. However, this is not to imply that the geographical distribution of lone parenthood within nations has not been considered; Winchester (90) examined regional distributions within Britain (England & Wales) and Australia as a context for a more detailed study at the city level. In Britain, Winchester observes a

Figure 2.1

National Incidence Of Lone Parent Families With Dependent Children : Some Industrialised Nations



Source: Ermisch (91, p.6).

Notes: The definition of a dependent child (and therefore a lone parent family) varies from nation-to-nation (Ermisch (91, p.24).

Legend: U.S. (United States) Swe (Sweden) G.B. (Great Britain) Bel (Belgium) Neth (Netherlands) Swit (Switzerland) Ger (Germany) Fra (France) Ire (Ireland) Jap (Japan)

marked metropolitan concentration and a less marked core/periphery pattern (although the latter can be disputed from the evidence discussed in the paper). She suggests that this regional distribution may reflect structural differences in age, socio-economic status and racial composition. While the explanations for the regional distribution of lone parents in Australia are similar, the spatial outcome differs dramatically, i.e. lone parents are concentrated in large isolated cities and relatively *fewer* lone parents are found in major metropolitan centres.

Finally, several studies have been undertaken at the 'local' level. In addition to Winchester's (90) comparison of Plymouth (England) - which consolidated an early study by Furnival (87) - and Wollongong (Australia), Rose & Le Bourdias (86) have discussed the experience of Montreal (Canada). Winchester has also produced more detailed analyses of one particular housing estate in Wollongong (Winchester 91a; 91b). However, no general conclusion can be drawn from these studies. Rose and Le Bourdias (86) describe an homogenising of the lone parent population throughout Montreal. They suggest that the increasing youthfulness of the lone parent population accounts for this; implying that a youthful population is a mobile one. Winchester (90) reports a more even distribution for Plymouth, but a marked concentration in the periphery of Wollongong. Winchester also notes that in North America there appears to be city centre concentration ,whereas

in Britain (although not for Plymouth), concentrations are found on the city periphery. This leads Winchester (90, p.79) to call for:

> *" ... more detailed analysis ... of the intra-urban location and housing conditions of one-parent families in metropolitan areas of Britain. "*

What direction should studies of the spatial distribution of lone parents take? First, there is a need to consider more fully the implications of the *definition* of a lone parent family on the geographical outcomes that follow. This is most critical at the national scale, where specifications of a dependent child vary considerably. However, it may also be an important issue at the local scale, i.e. as lone parent households are often taken to be synonymous for lone parent families (see 1.3.1), there is a need to gauge whether any geographical misrepresentations results from this oversight. Furthermore, unofficial definitions must also be considered. Perceptions of lone parent status are not limited to those whose children are officially classified as dependent, or to those who do not live with their partner. The possibility that the definition of lone parent varies from place-to-place must be considered. A second line of enquiry should be to utilise the Census of 1991's resources (Martin 1993) to chart the *local lone parent geography* at the micro-scale (see Winchester above). Third, there is a need to look beyond the distribution of lone parents to consider the *distribution* of different *types of lone parent*, e.g. working lone parents, those with pre-school children. The lone parent label disguises as much as it reveals and a greater sensitivity to variations in necessary to maximise the utility of the geographic contribution. Finally, more effort must be directed to *explain* these distributions; as yet, attempts at explanation are little more than informed guesswork. In conclusion, there remains much for geographers to do in charting the basic geography of lone parenthood.

2.2.2 SPATIALITY OF LONE PARENT LIVING

Environmental constraint is commonly *assumed* to be a characteristic of lone parent's lives. Far less common are attempts to research this issue directly. One study which has specifically examined lone parents' environmental constraints is Isobel Robertson's (84) time-space analysis of lone parent lifestyle on a peripheral housing estate in Glasgow (Scotland).

Having described how lone parent families are concentrated in Glasgow's four peripheral housing estates and having stated that the lone parent lifestyle is "reasonably well-defined" (low flexibility and living in close proximity to friends & relatives), Robertson constructs a time-space model to estimate lone parents' accessibility to shopping, childcare and employment using public transport. The research demonstrated that the least accessible areas were the ones in which lone parents were most likely to live. Policy recommendations were suggested for transport planners (re-routing existing bus services and co-ordinating timetables of different bus companies operating in the area), and housing managers (upgrading "poorer" housing areas).

Clearly, there is considerable potential for *more* research in this field; as to the particular direction this research should take, three suggestions are now made. First, there is a need to systematically

examine different *locational contexts*; are lone parents better off in the poorer areas (which may be better served with public services)? Is there a rural/urban divide in the life patterns of lone parents lives? Second, different *comparative contexts* must be drawn to assess the wider significance of the lone parent findings. How do lone parents compare to partnered parents in the same area? How do lone parents compare to other people of the same age in the same area? Finally, there is a need for systematic exploration of particular themes, e.g. leisure, work, shopping, and a comparison of the different lone parent geographies associated with each.

2.2.3 COMMUNITY ACTION

Rose & Le Bourdias (86) have discussed community action by lone parents. Their paper is primarily concerned with the characteristics of lone parents in different places and spaces within Montreal. They describe two forms of community action that shape the (lone parent) character of the inner-city areas. In Plateau Mont-Royal an externally driven process of gentrification has generated an influx of middle income lone parents. Consequently, a traditional habitat of low-income, single parent families is under threat. In Lower Outremont, a quite different form of community action is described. It is reported that a 'lone parent community' within the area formed a housing co-operative and designed & developed a complex primarily serving lone parent families. Once again, it is a result of action by middle class lone parents.

These initiatives raise a number of questions of broader significance. First, both case studies are examples of dynamic positive action by and for lone parents; this contrasts the image of the lone parent as merely a recipient of their condition. Furthermore, both examples demonstrate the importance of 'class' for interpretations of lone parenthood. That is in the Plateau Mont-Royal example different classes of lone parent are in conflict with one another. Clearly, to treat lone parents as a homogeneous group is erroneous.

Another insight from this particular study is that geographical concentration of lone parents can be perceived positively; this contrasts sharply with the feelings toward the concentration of lone parents in British housing estates (One-Plus & Shelter 88). Concentration may appeal to some aspects of feminist theory (in that it leads to women's self-empowerment and offers the potential for greater control by women over their own lives); however, there is also the danger that lone parents will be socially and spatially marginalised. Furthermore, many believe that progress will only be made when the *similarities* between two-parent & one-parent families are recognised and discussed (Millar & Glendinning 87; 89; 92 & Robertson 84); greater exposure to other family forms is a necessary context for such shared understanding to flourish.

The question of lone parent action in the community is an issue of considerable geographic importance. A critical review of the advantages and disadvantages spatial concentrations is required in preference to one-sided accounts (with political motivations) that argue the case either for dispersal or concentration. Related to this analysis, is the need to consider the attitudes of other

groups within the community to the presence of lone parents; as yet the extent to which lone parents are a source of conflict or resentment in particular communities is a matter for speculation. Finally, future analysis should seek to assess the activity level of lone parents in different types of community; it is highly probable that activity varies between communities and research should seek to establish and explain those variations that do exist.

2.2.4 THEMATIC STUDIES

A few studies have inadvertently shed light on the *geography* of lone parenthood. For example, a number of studies have reported on *housing* and lone parenthood (e.g. Symon 90; Stone & Bull 89: 90) and have thereby contributed toward a geography of lone parent housing. Issues covered include the differential treatment of lone parents by local government housing departments (i.e. local authority districts) in Strathclyde Region (One Plus & Shelter 88), the spatial implications of divorce and separation (Sullivan 86; Holman et al 87) and the general condition of the housing stock in which lone parents reside (Harloe 92). Similarly, Winchester (91b) produced a report that assessed the provision of services and uptake of facilities by lone parents in a suburb of Wollongong, Australia. This analysis identified transportation, childcare and the negative image of the area as the major problems faced by Bellambi's lone parent population.

Future geographic research should look at a broader range of life concerns, e.g. despite some social science research on the social support network of lone parents (e.g. Tietjen 85), there is no analysis of the critical role of geographical context in influencing the nature of support that can be drawn upon. Particular attention should be paid to the key themes of childcare, work and welfare. For example, maintenance receipt has become a key point of debate in Britain (2.4.2), but the geographical dimensions are as yet ignored. In situations where the *Child Support Agency* has enforced an maintenance order on an absent parent, what impact does this have on the lone parent if the absent parent lives nearby? What are the migration implications on the *Child Support Act*, i.e. what is the impact of the Act's emphasis on regular payment of maintenance upon those who lived in owner occupied housing prior to becoming a lone parent- many of whom would have received the marital home (and avoided migration) as part of the divorce settlement prior to this act?

2.2.5 CONCLUSION

There are three questions that must be addressed. First, *what has geography got to contribute to the study of lone parenthood?* As this section has shown geographers can account for the geographic patterns, processes and contexts of lone parenthood. In each sub-section, specific examples of what geographers must now do have been suggested. These concerns are not specific to the geography of lone parenthood; rather, they would apply to any field of geographic enquiry.

However, the poorly developed geographic knowledge on lone parenthood means that there is considerable potential for geographers to utilise these skills to useful ends.

Why should geographers be more concerned now? First, the growth in the numbers of lone parents (2.3.1b) means that lone parenthood is becoming a more important issue in society; in seeking to comprehend social reality, human geographers will be increasingly asked to address lone parent issues. This would not be such a geographic problem if the geographic dimensions of lone parenthood were considered by other social researchers. However, the reality is that the geographic dimension has been overlooked and will continue to be so, until geographers intervene. Finally, it is most certainly the case that the geography of lone parenthood is more important now; the growing spatial segregation of lone parents within the city and the implications of reduced welfare payments are that the local living is a more common experience for the lone parents of the 1990s vis-à-vis the 1980s.

How would geography be enriched? Most importantly, it would provide geographers with an opportunity to engage with a major societal shift, i.e., the growth in the number of lone parent families is part of a wider societal shift - the changing nature of the family. Introspectively, the prospect of more family based research opens up possibilities for greater co-operation by the social and population research traditions within geography, for as Hilary Winchester (90) observes, this subject matter has previously fallen between these two branches of geography. With an increasingly specialist geography in the 1990s (Haggett 94), opportunities for wide ranging geographical analysis are to be encouraged.

2.3 DEMOGRAPHY

Demographic analysis has contributed greatly to the understanding of lone parenthood in Britain. While its greatest value is in the provision of basic stock and trend information, sophisticated analyses have explored the processes of lone parenthood. Presently, key findings from both 'levels' of analysis are summarised.

2.3.1 INCIDENCE

2.3.1a Stock Numbers

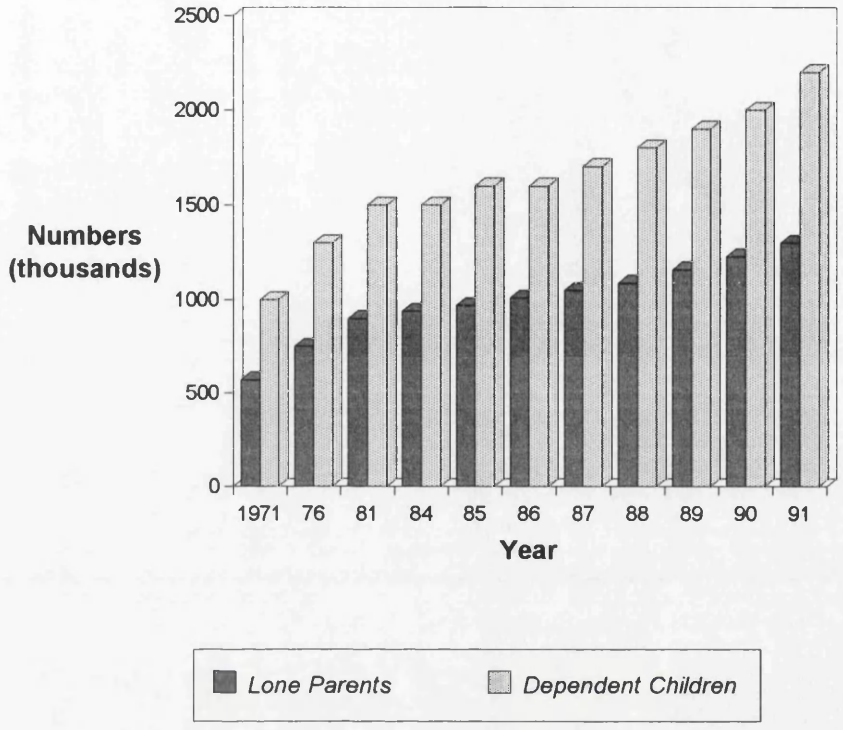
Since the mid-1980's there have been over one million lone parent families with dependent children in Great Britain; the most recent calculations (Haskey 93) ranging from 1.16 million (based on the 1989 Family Expenditure Survey & Child Benefit Statistics) to 1.39 million (based on Social Security Statistics). According to Haskey, the best-estimate is 1.3 million (Figure 2.2), which suggests that lone parent families account for one in five families with dependent children. Other data sources have estimated that lone parent households with dependent children account for almost one out of every seventeen households in Britain (General Household Survey 1992).

2.3.1b Past Trends In Numbers

Since 1971, there has been a steady increase of between thirty and forty thousand lone parent families with dependent children per year (Figure 2.2). By 1989, this amounted to a doubling of the population from the 1971 base of 570,000. This absolute growth in *numbers* is matched by a doubling in the *proportion* of all families with dependent children over the same period (Table 2.1). The proportion of lone parent households (of total households) has only increased slightly since 1979, although there are now twice as many lone parent households *with dependent children*; previously, the proportion with dependent children was comparable to the proportion of lone parent households without dependent children. While Haskey (93) warns of using estimates of lone parent numbers to draw conclusions about the rate of change in the short term, recent evidence suggests that the number of lone parent families is growing at a slightly greater rate than was experienced in the mid-1980s.

Figure 2.2

Number of Lone Parent Families With Dependent Children and Dependent Children In Lone Parent Families: Great Britain 1971-91

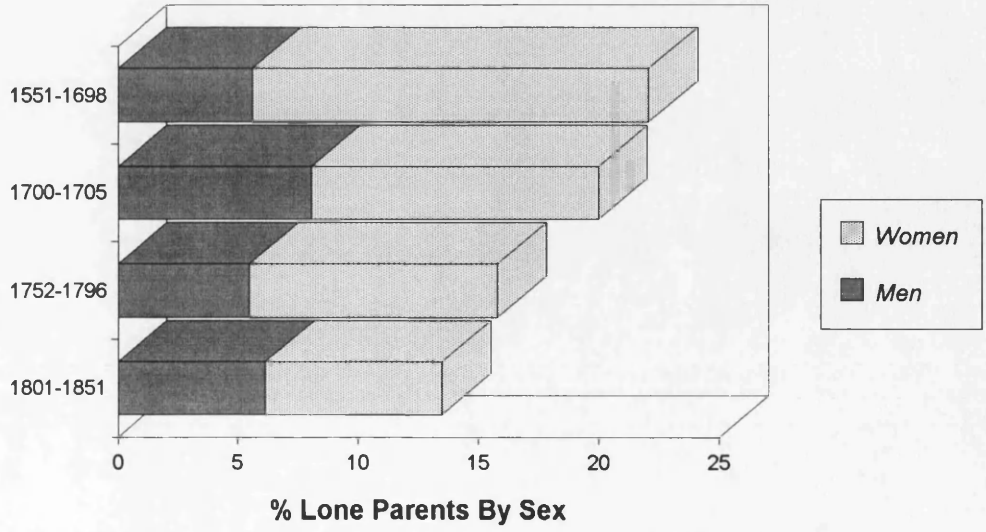


Source: calculated by Haskey (93), based on *General Household Survey.*

Notes: All figures based on three-year running averages, except 1991 (two-year average)

Figure 2.3

Families With Dependent Children Headed By A Lone Parent : England 1551-1851



Source: Snell & Millar (97, p.392).

Table 2.1
Families And Households By Type of Family : Great Britain 1972-92

	PERCENTAGE (OF HOUSEHOLDS THEN FAMILIES) OF EACH TYPE											
	YEAR											
	1972	75	79	81	83	85	87	88	89	90	91	92
HOUSEHOLDS												
1 Person Only			23	22	23	24	25	26	25	26	26	27
2 or more Unrelated adults			3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Married Couple with dependent children			31	32	30	28	28	26	26	25	25	24
with non-dependent children only			7	8	8	8	9	8	9	8	8	8
no children			27	26	27	27	27	28	27	28	28	28
Lone Parent with dependent children			4	4	5	4	4	5	5	6	6	6
with non-dependent children only			4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3
Two or more Families			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
FAMILIES												
Partnered Couple	92	90	88	87	86	86	85	84	83	80	81	79
All Lone Parents	8	10	12	13	14	14	15	16	17	20	19	21
Lone Mother	7	9	10	11	12	12	12	15	15	18	18	19
Single	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	5	5	6	6	7
Widowed	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Divorced	2	3	4	4	5	5	5	6	6	7	6	7
Separated	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	3	4	4	5
Lone Father	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	3

Source : General Household Survey 1992 (OPCS 1994, Tables 2.20 & 2.34)

However, lone parenthood is not a contemporary phenomenon; rather the current incidence is similar to that of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in England and Wales (Figure 2.3). Nevertheless, there are important compositional differences. Historically, a higher proportion of lone parent families were headed by a man. This can be explained by the fact that the death of a partner was a much more common entry-route into lone parenthood; widowing being less gender-selective than separation, divorce and non-partnership based entry routes into lone parenthood. Second, household arrangements differ significantly from that of previous centuries, i.e. there is now a much more prevalence of lone parent households and fewer lone parent families living in extended households.

2.3.1c Projections of Numbers

In 1991, Ermisch estimated that the growth in the number of lone parent families with dependent children in Britain would increase at a slower rate in the foreseeable future; using trends in divorce rates, entry dates into marriage, cohabitation and re-marriage rates, Ermisch forecasted that the proportion of lone parent families of all families with dependent children would rise to one-in-five; as 2.3.1a has shown, this projection has already been surpassed. There is a need for an improved projection of the number of lone parents in the years ahead.

Clearly, lone parents have become a more typical family unit over the previous two decades. However, just as a broader comparative perspective dispels the myth that lone parenthood is a contemporary phenomenon, there is much to be learned by questioning the common assumption that the lone parent population is homogeneous; there is a need to examine the substantial differences among lone parents.

2.3.2 FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS

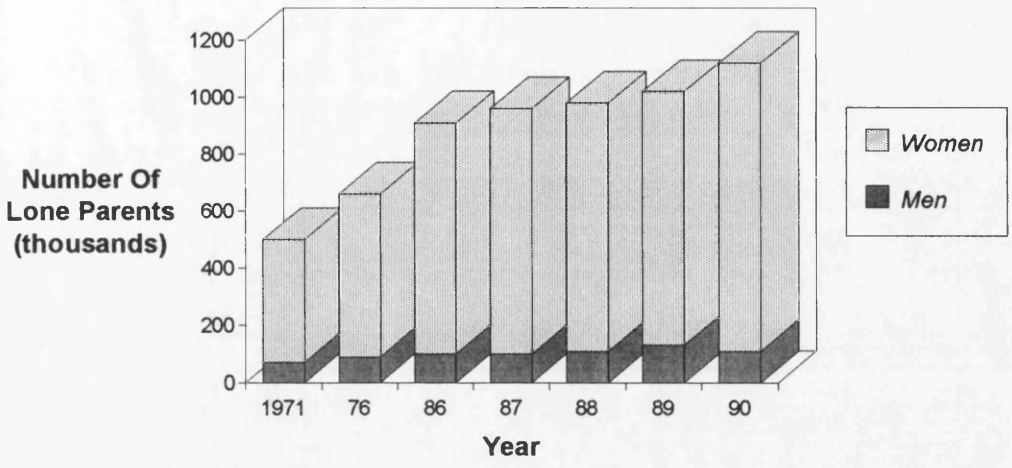
2.3.2a Head of Lone Parent Family

GENDER : The *absolute* number of lone fathers almost doubled from 70,000 in 1971 to 110,000 in 1990. However, they became *relatively* less common, i.e. relative to lone mothers, their proportional incidence actually decreased by three percentage points to 9.8% of the lone parent population in 1990 (Figure 2.4).

MARITAL STATUS ON ENTRY TO LONE PARENTHOOD : More dramatic changes have occurred in terms of lone parent's marital status on their entry to lone parenthood (Figure 2.5). That is, from 1971 to 1990 (Haskey 93), the number of single lone parents quadrupled in number (to 390,000), the number of divorced more than tripled (to 415,000), the number of separated increased moderately (to 235,000) and the number of widows almost halved (to 75,000).

Figure 2.4

Lone Parents With Dependent Children By Sex: Great Britain 1971-90

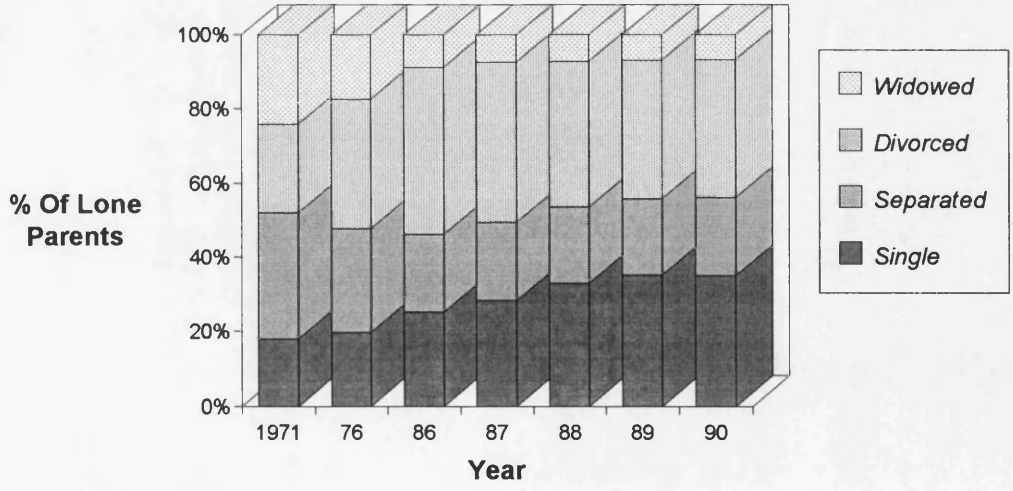


Source: Haskey (91, p.36).

Notes: All figures based on three-year running averages, except 1990 (two-year average).

Figure 2.5

Lone Mothers By Previous Marital Status: Great Britain 1971-90



Source: Haskey (91, p.36).

Notes: All figures based on three-year running averages, except 1990 (two-year average).

The recent trend has been toward a marked increase in the proportion of single lone mothers since 1986; should this trend continue, then single lone mothers will soon be the most common type of female lone parent. This is politically interesting given the Government's concern with this particular group of lone parents; based on crude aggregate numbers, the Government appear to be justifiably concerned with the recent growth in this particular segment of the lone parent population. On an historical note, the upsurge in divorce, which is now stabilising in the late 1980s, initially reflected legislative changes making divorce easier in the 1970s; the initial substantial growth reflected backlog, the subsequent increase reflecting an easier passage to divorce. Finally, despite the recent upsurge in the number of single lone parent families, it remains the case that 'partnership breakdown' is the most common entry route to lone parenthood; this has been an enduring feature over the last twenty years.

AGE OF LONE PARENT: As a parent of a dependent child, it is to be expected that lone parents will be younger than the adult population on the whole. Indeed, this is so with two-thirds (63%) of lone parents younger than forty years of age (Haskey 93). Equal proportions of lone parents are aged 16-24, 25-29, 30-34 and 35-39 with a median age of 33 years old. Significantly higher numbers of single lone parents are in the younger cohort (51% are aged between 16-24, while only 19% of all lone parents are aged 16-24); while higher numbers of widowed lone parents are older (modal group is 40-44: nine-tenths of all widowed lone parents are older than 35). Divorced and separated share a similar pattern, although the former 'peaks' slightly earlier (Figure 2.6). Lone fathers are most akin to widowed lone mothers, although they tend to be more concentrated in the late 30's/early 40's age range (50% of lone fathers are aged between 35 and 44).

ETHNICITY : In terms of the proportion of *lone parents* of all families and households, there is virtually no difference between white & 'other' ethnic groups. However, there are marked differences *between* 'other' ethnic minority groups, defined according to their region of origin (Figure 2.7). For example, whereas only 6% of families whose head originates from the Indian sub-continent are from lone parent families, the equivalent proportion for West Indian families is 50% (Ballard and Kalra 94).

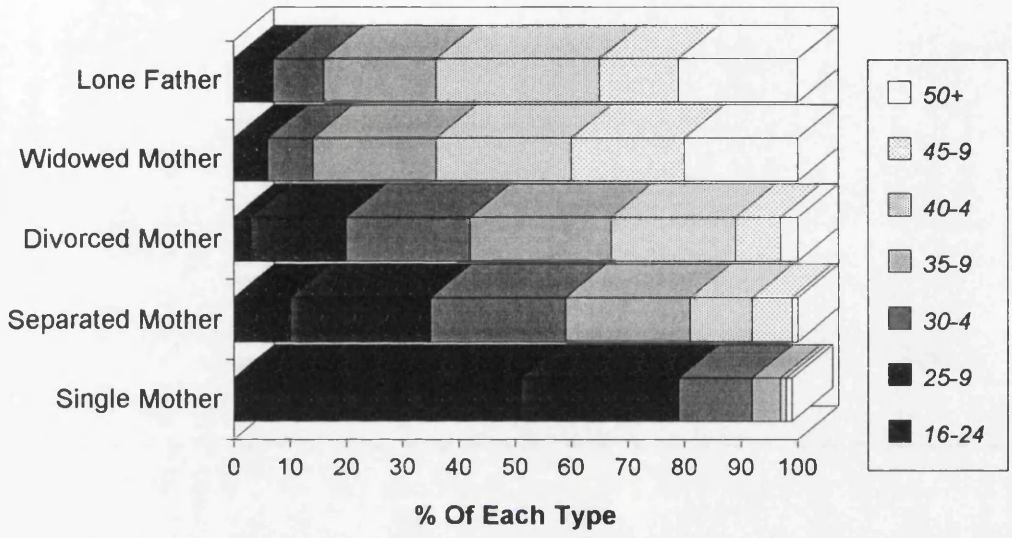
2.3.2b Structure of the Lone Parent Family

Typically, lone parent families are small, i.e. with an average of 1.7 children (Haskey 93), a figure which has remained constant throughout the 1980's. In the early 1970's, there were marked differences in the number of children of single lone mothers and those who had previously lived with partners (separated, divorced and widowed), i.e. their average number of children was 1.2, compared to 2.0, 1.9 and 1.8 respectively (Haskey 93). However, a marked reduction in the number of dependent children in widowed families in the 1970's and a slight increase in the number of dependent children for single lone mothers in the 1980's, has blurred this distinction. The child/family ratios for divorced and separated lone parents have decreased slightly but remain higher than that of single lone mothers and widowed lone parents (currently 1.9 and 2.0 compared to 1.5

and 1.6). It has been estimated that 2.2 million children now live in lone-parent families or between one-in-five and one-in-six of all dependent children (Haskey 93).

Figure 2.6

Age Of Lone Parents With Dependent Children By Marital Status And Sex: Great Britain 1989-91

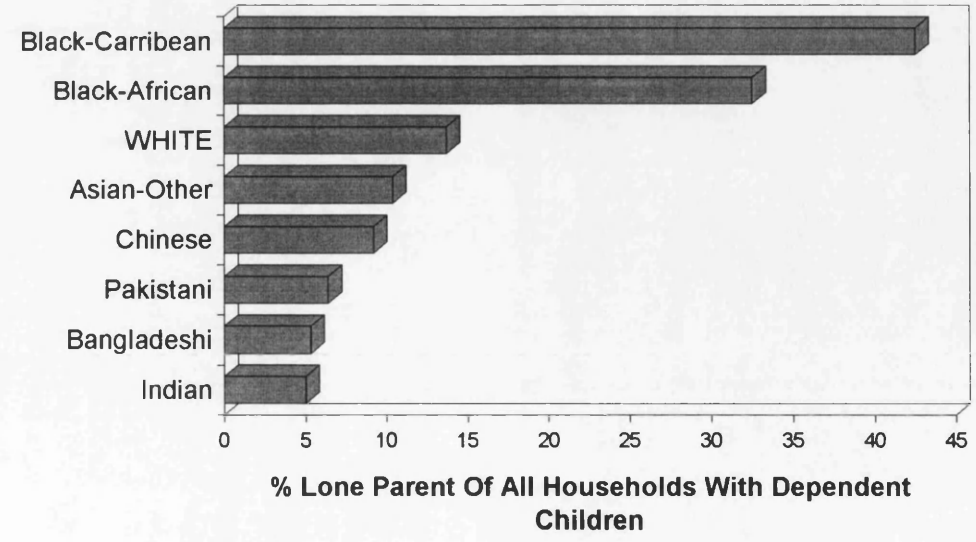


Source: calculated by Haskey (93, p.32), based on *General Household Survey.*

Notes: Figures are averages for the three-year period.

Figure 2.7

Lone Parent Households With Dependent Children Of All Households, By Ethnic Group Of Head Of Household: Great Britain 1991



Source: Ballard & Kalra (94), based on 1991 *G.B. Census Of Population* data.

2.3.3 FAMILY DYNAMICS

2.3.3a Duration

Information on the duration of lone parenthood has been provided by Bradshaw and Millar (91), Haskey (91) and Ermisch (91), all of whom agree that lone parenthood is a short term phenomenon. However, more precise estimations of the duration vary from Bradshaw and Millar (91) who suggest a *median* duration of 46 months, to Ermisch (91) who suggests a *median* of 34.5 months.

Haskey (91) has shown how duration varies between lone parents. Short durations are particularly characteristic of separated lone mothers (85% are lone parents for less than 5 years). Ermisch (91) conducted multi-variate analysis and found that employment before the relationship with the ex-partner, fewer children and youthfulness were each associated with short durations of lone parenthood.

2.3.3b Entry & Exit Rates

Modelling techniques and descriptive survey analysis have been used to interpret the dynamics of lone parenthood. Results for entry rates are consistent, although those for exit rates are not.

ENTRY RATES: Based upon a model of poverty risk, divorce and re-marriage, Ermisch et al (90) suggest that seven factors are associated with higher entry rates to lone parenthood (persons who are more likely to become a lone parent), i.e. those who prior to lone parenthood had; a high earning potential, work experience, a pre-marital conception, older children, one child (or more than three children), a particular year of marriage (e.g. 1980 marriages registered a 20% higher divorce risk than those of 1977) and those who married at a younger age.

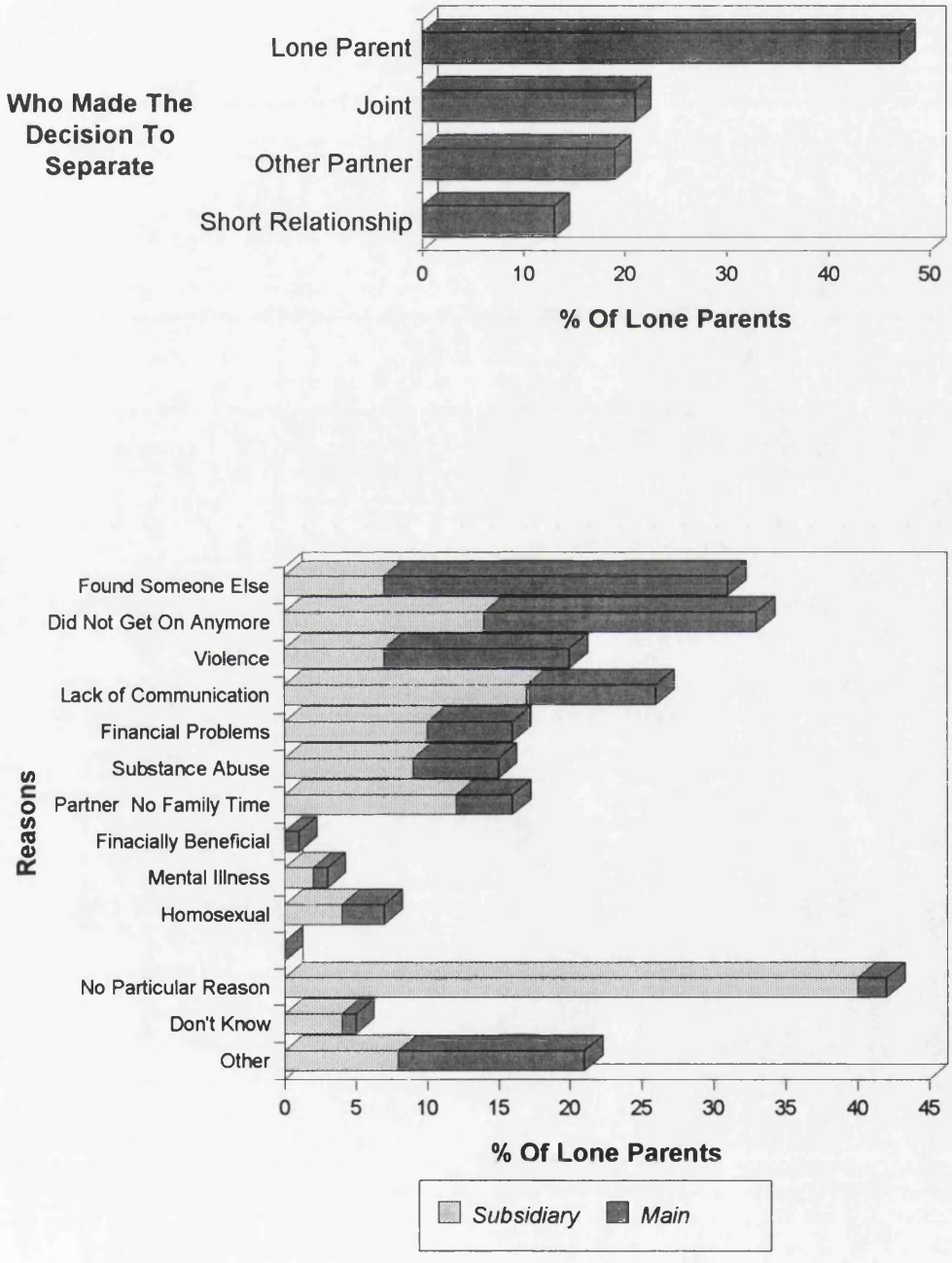
A different approach was employed by Bradshaw & Millar (91); they were more concerned with explanations that were beyond the reach of modelling, i.e. adequate data being less readily available. Based on survey returns, they found that cohabiting adults exhibit similar entry patterns to lone parenthood as for previously married adults. That is, both gave similar reasons for relationship breakdown and were partnered for a similar duration beforehand. Furthermore, they challenge the assumption that young females get pregnant deliberately; only 8% of those who became lone parents as a teenager claimed to have planned their pregnancies. Figure 2.8 demonstrates that lone parents were more likely to take the decision to separate, and that the main reasons for doing so are infidelity (one-quarter), not getting on (one-fifth) and violence (one-sixth).

EXIT RATES: Table 2.2 compares Ermisch et al's (90) and Bradshaw & Millar's (91) explanations for exit rates from lone parenthood. They contradict each other on three occasions and Ermisch et al suggest two factors which Bradshaw & Millar did not find important. Yet, both claim their

results have intuitive belief! The differences may be explained in terms of the sampling frames; Ermisch et al (90) used information from the 1980 *Women in Employment Survey* (Department of Employment 84) which did not include information about single lone parents. It may also reflect temporal change; Ermisch et al used data from the 1970's, whereas Bradshaw used data from 1989. Whatever the case, the reasons underlying the exit rates from lone parenthood are not yet adequately understood.

Figure 2.8

Separating: Decision-Making and Reasons



Source: Bradshaw & Millar (91).

Notes: The data reported in the table are the opinions of lone parents - *not* those of the other partner.

Table 2.2
Likelihood Of Leaving Lone Parenthood

CAUSAL FACTOR	Jenkins et al (91)	Bradshaw & Millar (91)
A	B	C
WORK EXPERIENCE	Increases likelihood of re-partnering	Decreases likelihood of re-partnering
FAMILY SIZE	Large families have a reduced re-marriage rate	At best, minimal influence on exit rate
DURATION OF RELATIONSHIP	Longer relationship decreases likelihood of re-partnering	Increases likelihood of re-partnering
AGE	Older less likely to re-partner	–
RECEIPT OF MAINTENANCE	–	Increases likelihood of re-partnering
AGE OF CHILDREN	–	Younger children increases likelihood of re-partnering

2.3.4 CONCLUSION

Substantial progress has been made toward understanding the demography of the lone parent population in Britain. Furthermore, future demographic changes can be easily monitored by analysing the annual survey returns of the *General Household Survey*. Indeed, the regular reports on the characteristics of lone parent families in *Population Trends* by OPCS researchers (Haskey 89, 91, 93) implies that such demographic knowledge can be gained without recourse to secondary data analysis. However, there are two key areas in which progress should be made. First, there is a need to improve the forecasting capabilities of demographic analysis in the short-term. Currently, the utility of demographic research is often undermined by its inability to contribute on this time-scale. Indeed, more generally, there are no demographic forecasts that predict when the incidence of lone parenthood will peak. This is perhaps the single most important forecast that demographers could make with regard to lone parenthood. Second, while the availability of basic demographic data is satisfactory, more attention must be paid to more complex demographic issues than is currently the case. A striking example of the need for more analysis of complex demographic issues is the sharply diverging accounts of exit rates from lone parenthood that are currently posited.

2.4 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

2.4.1 INCOME AND POVERTY

The association between poverty and lone parenthood, particularly lone *mother*hood, is long-standing. Millar & Bradshaw (87, p.234) trace such concerns back to the classical studies of poverty at the turn of the century (e.g. Rowntree 1902) and note how it was a prominent feature of studies emanating from the 're-discovery of poverty' in the 1960's (e.g. Abel-Smith & Townsend 65). More recently, a number of studies have focused specifically on lone parent poverty (e.g. Millar 87, 89, 92; Millar & Bradshaw 87; Bradshaw & Millar 91; Wright 92). This recent literature has focused on both *absolute* poverty (using a fixed poverty line adjusted for inflation) and *relative* poverty (based on a flexible poverty line defined in relation to the average standard of living i.e. adjusted for inflation *and* growth in the average income level). Both approaches lead to the conclusion that lone parents are over-represented among the ranks of the poor (incidence of poverty) and that their level of poverty is higher than most (average deprivation). However, there is sharp divergence in the interpretation of these statistical facts.

Wright (92), in a cross-sectional comparative analysis of absolute lone parent poverty between 1968 and 1986, demonstrates that while lone parent poverty became more widespread and more intense, the gap between lone-parent households and all other households has closed considerably; absolute poverty fell by 73.5% for lone parents, compared to 55.6% for all households and 61.6% for two-parent families (when the poverty line is drawn at 50% below mean income). Wright also examined the influence of the increasing numbers of lone parents on poverty. The data suggests that the growth in lone parenthood is responsible for increasing lone parents share of poverty but that this had virtually no effect on the level of poverty (average deprivation). Thus, Wright (92, p.22) concludes:

" significant progress has been made in the alleviation of (lone parent) poverty "

Contrary to this, Millar & Bradshaw (87), in a longitudinal analysis of the poverty of low income families between 1978 and 1980, using data from the Department of Health and Social Security (hereafter, DHSS) and the *Family Expenditure Survey* (O.P.C.S. 84) reach the opposite conclusion; the financial position of lone parents *deteriorated* relative to two-parent households and relative to lone parents who re-partnered. They suggest that the lack of adequate childcare provision coupled with the low earning potential of lone parents (nine-tenths of whom are women), placed them in a Supplementary Benefit trap (now Income Support) which in turn accounts for their over-representation among the poor.

How this is resolved depends on whether an absolute or a relative approach to poverty measurement is favoured (see Sen 83; Atkinson 87; Townsend 85 as examples of standpoint positions in this debate). However, it is little comfort to learn that if significant progress in the alleviation of lone parent poverty has already been made, that 957,000 lone parents drew Income Support in 1993 (D.S.S. 1993).

More generally, analyses of lone parent poverty use income-based measures. There is a need to employ a more wide-ranging definition of deprivation; first, because the nature of lone parent poverty is multi-dimensional, but also because it should not be assumed that income *always* underlies poverty; the factors creating lone parent poverty must be disentangled and accounted for. Furthermore, the position of the concealed lone parent family has been ignored; Millar & Bradshaw (87) include multi-unit households as a single category, thereby ignoring the different configurations within and Wright (92) excludes multi-unit households altogether. This would raise a new dimension to the 'within-household allocation of resources' debate (Jenkins 91), i.e. intra-household studies of poverty examine the distribution of resources between men and women; a discussion of intra-household poverty distribution of resources *between the family units contained within* would be a useful contribution to knowledge.

2.4.2 MAINTENANCE

In recent times, the UK government have shown an interest in the payment of maintenance, i.e. financial support from the non-custodial parent(s). This manifested itself in a 1990 White Paper '*Children Come First*' (Cm 1264 90), a 1993 Government Act '*Child Support Act*' and the formation of the '*Child Support Agency*' to administer maintenance payments to lone parents. Bradshaw & Millar (91, chpt. 7) attribute this Government interest to the growth in the numbers of lone parent families, the welfare budget implications of this growth and a concern that absent parents are ignoring their parental responsibilities. Lone parent support groups and other voluntary welfare agencies have been scathing in their criticisms of this Government initiative and have interpreted their involvement as no more than an attempt to reduce the welfare budget.

However, maintenance has been on the academic agenda since the early 1980's; Doig (82) and Dobash & Wasoff (86) examined divorces and maintenance in Scotland, Eekelaar & MacLean (86) conducted similar work in Oxford and the O.P.C.S. (89) undertook a national survey in 1984. Findings are similar and indicate that not all lone parents received maintenance (e.g. O.P.C.S. [89] found that only 48% of lone parents receive *child* maintenance awards and 15% receive *personal* awards) and that the level of these awards fall far below D.S.S expected levels. Eekelaar & MacLean (86) and Dobash & Wasoff (86) report a substantial payment default rate (32% and 54% respectively). Furthermore, Dobash & Wasoff (86) report that only one-quarter of defaulters are pursued successfully through the courts.

However, early research was limited to the divorced, thereby ignoring separated and single lone parents. Furthermore, many important issues remain to be addressed, e.g. the capacity of absent parents to make payments and the links between maintenance and relationships with children. Bradshaw and Millar (91) addressed many of these issues within their national survey of lone parents in the UK, providing many insights into the recipient of maintenance by lone parents:

1) They found that certain types of lone parent were less likely to receive maintenance, i.e. men, non-earners, non-Europeans, those not maintaining child contact, lone parents of shorter duration and those in receipt of income support.
2) They examined the relationship between advice-seeking and receipt of payment, finding that those who sought help were more likely to receive maintenance. Solicitors and courts were most commonly approached for help, with those lone parents who used the courts being more likely to receive maintenance.
3) The form of payment was considered. Most payments were regular and of the same amount (64%), although a substantial minority were irregular (17%). The means of payment is mainly direct (49%), with 17% by standing order and 12% via the D.S.S.
4) The level of payments was examined. Males, non-earner, income-support recipients and those whose settlement did not involve a court order received lower payments.

Beyond these general insights, some particularly significant conclusions were drawn regarding previous marital status and maintenance. Single lone parents fare particularly poorly in terms of maintenance payments; 50% fewer receive maintenance and, of those who do, twice as many receive irregular payments and the level of payment 50% lower (Table 2.3). Single lone parents can also be distinguished according to the reasons for why they don't receive maintenance; more single lone parents prefer not receive it. There are smaller differences to be discerned between separated and divorced lone parents; divorced lone parents are more likely to receive maintenance, although a greater number of separated lone parents receive regular and higher payments (Table 2.3).

Finally, they looked beyond the lone parent experience and canvassed lone parents' assessment of their partners' capability to pay or to pay more. Equal proportions of lone parents thought that the absent parent could/could not pay more, although more of those receiving maintenance thought that their partner could pay more compared to those not receiving payment. A typology was constructed regarding the capacity of the absent parent to increase payment (Table 2.4). They concluded that over half of those lone parents not receiving maintenance, and who are aware of their ex-partners' situation, have partners who are able to pay.

Table 2.3
Maintenance By Previous Marital Status

	PERCENTAGE OF (each) LONE PARENT POPULATION		
	DIVORCED	SEPARATED	SINGLE
A	B	C	D
a) RECEIPT OF MAINTENANCE[1]			
Ever	45	31	21
Regular	32	25	13
b) REASONS FOR NOT RECEIVING			
Prefer Not To	16	14	24
Ex is Unemployed	16	19	12
DK Whereabouts	8	14	17
Ex Can't Afford It	14	19	10
Ex Refused	16	11	7
Other/Don't Know	30	23	30
c) LEVEL OF PAYMENT (£)	27.89	33.33	14.94

Sources : a,b,c) Bradshaw & Miller (91, Table 7.1, Table 7.2, Table 7.8)

Table 2.4
Absent Partners Capacity To Increase Maintenance Payments : Assessments Of Lone Parents

CATEGORIES	INCIDENCE AMONG LONE PARENTS		LONE PARENTS KNOWLEDGE OF ABSENT PARTNER				MAINTENANCE ASSESSMENT
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	**********	38	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK
2	**********	23	N	N	N	-	High
3	*****	11	Y	N	Y	N	High
4	***	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	High
5	**	4	Y	Y	N	N	Low
6	***	6	Y	-	Y	N	Med
7	******	12	N	N	-	-	Low

Key : A - Bradshaw & Miller (91) Typology
B/C - % of Lone Parent Population
D - Re-Partnered
E - Re-Partnered With Dependent Children
F - Employed
G - Partner Employed
H - Ability To Pay More (Lone Parents assessment)

Notes : DK - Don't Know Y - Yes N - No * - 1 star = 2%

Source : Bradshaw & Millar (91)

2.4.3 HOUSING

" The housing consequences of lone parenthood are profound "

(Bradshaw & Millar 91, p.93)

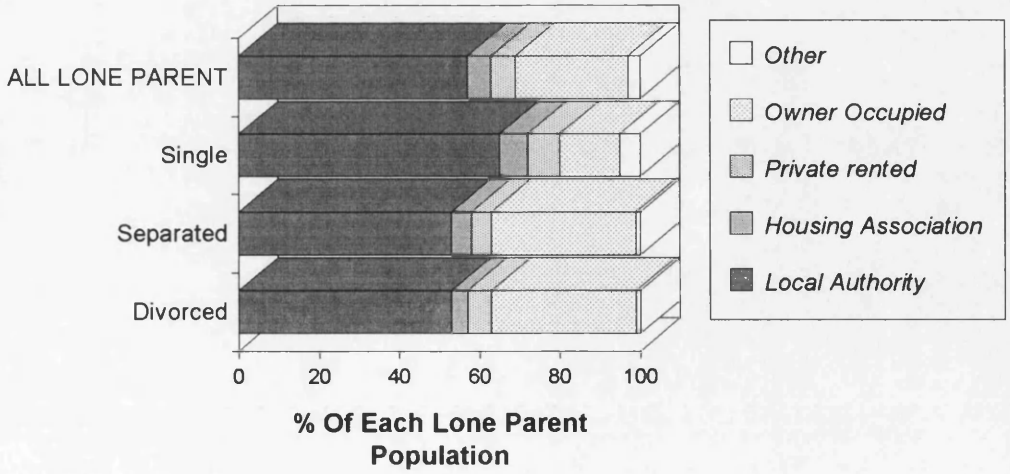
2.4.3a Current Housing Situation

TENURE : Lone parents are less likely to be owner-occupiers than partnered parents; this is the case throughout the developed world, e.g. in Australia (Smith 90), Canada (McKee 92), Britain (Haskey 89). Otherwise the dominant tenure of lone parents reflects variations in the provision of rented accommodation. Thus, in Britain, most lone parents live in public sector housing (Figure 2.9), whereas the private rented sector is more prevalent outside Britain.

In Britain, age, previous marital status, socio-economic position and gender account for tenure variations among lone parents (Haskey 89). In terms of marital status, widowed (above average owner occupation) and single (well below average owner occupation) are at opposite extremes. Separated and divorced lone parents have almost identical profiles (Figure 2.9).

Figure 2.9

Housing Tenure Of Lone Parents By Previous Marital Status (Great Britain)



Source: Bradshaw & Millar (91)

TENANCY : Aggregate data is less readily available on who, if anybody, lone parents share their accommodation with. However, survey evidence has shed useful insights into this aspect of lone parents' housing situation:

1) *Pre-Lone Parenthood*: One quarter of the non-widowed lone parent population shared accommodation with relatives immediately before lone parenthood - 60% of single lone parents - (Bradshaw & Millar 91, p.89). Thus, shared accommodation has been experienced by a significant proportion of lone parents.
2) *As A Lone Parent* : Sharing accommodation is experienced by many lone parents in the transition toward permanent accommodation as a lone parent.

EVALUATION OF CURRENT HOUSING : The vast majority of lone parents are satisfied with their housing; Bradshaw & Millar (91) found that, on a five point scale, four-fifths registered satisfaction. This is comparable to the G.B. average (as taken from the British Social Attitudes Survey - S.C.P.R. various). Among those who rent, more from the private sector are dissatisfied with their housing. In turn, more public sector tenants are dissatisfied than owner occupiers. More subtle differences are also evident when lone parents are compared to the wider population; while lone parents who are public sector tenants are as satisfied as other public sector tenants with their housing, twice the number of owner-occupier lone parents are dissatisfied (9%) compared to the G.B. average for owner-occupiers (4%) and one-third more privately renting lone parents are dissatisfied (28%) compared to the G.B. average for private renters (21%).

2.4.3b Lone Parenthood and Housing Dynamics

HOUSING MOVEMENT & LONE PARENT FORMATION: Information on the housing movements of lone parents are provided by surveys of the divorced and separated. For example, Sullivan (86) noted that women who had children were less likely to move on separation than those without. However, such work is limited in two respects:

1) *Problems of Inference*: Those who have children, i.e. those who became lone parents after separation, are not always distinguished from those without children, i.e. those who become single persons after separation.
2) *Widowed and Single Lone Parents*: By definition, studies of relationship breakdown omit both widowed and single lone parents from the analysis.

Bradshaw & Millar (91) present data on *lone parent* housing mobility. Unfortunately, they only discuss the results on the basis of tenure before separation (comparing owner-occupiers, private renters and public sector renters), i.e. they do not compare across previous marital status. Nevertheless, their data provides a useful summary of the non-widowed lone parents' housing behaviour. More than half of those surveyed had moved since becoming a lone parent; the majority making more than one move. Mobility was also high among those who had only recently become a lone parent; one-third of those who had been a lone parent for less than one year had migrated within

this period. In terms of tenure change, the trend was a movement into local authority housing (Figure 2.10a). Together with the (high) frequency of migration, this led Bradshaw & Millar (91) to conclude that temporary accommodation is prominent during the transition to lone parenthood. Yet despite 'downward' mobility in the housing market, most (54%) lone parents assessed that their current housing was better than before; only one-quarter assessed their housing had worsened since becoming a lone parent.

Figure 2.10

Housing Market Mobility And The Transition To Lone Parenthood

Changes In Tenure

		Percentage of Lone Parent Population	
Before	***After***		
Owner-Occupier	Same	**********	22
Owner-Occupier	Local Authority	********	16
Owner-Occupier	Other	*	2
Local Authority	Same	*************************	49
Local Authority	Owner-Occupier	***	6
Local Authority	Other	*	2
Other	Same	*	2
Other	Owner-Occupier	**	3
Other	Other	**	3

Source: Bradshaw & Millar (91)

Legend: Each * represents 2% of the lone parent population

Note: The table refers to tenure and not tenancy, i.e. owner-occupier, includes lone parents, sharing owner-occupied housing with the owner.

2.4.4 CONCLUSION

The dominant theme is socio-economic disadvantage. No matter what aspect of lone parents' socio-economic condition is considered, lone parents are cast in a disadvantageous light. As the title of the thesis suggests, lone parents are a deprived population group. However, a subsidiary conclusion to draw is that this (aggregate) conclusion, by no means implies that they are a homogeneous population; the cleavages among the lone parent population were particularly evident in terms of their experience of maintenance. A sensitivity to the differences among lone parents should be

upheld throughout the research. Finally, the housing results drew attention to the disjuncture that can exist between objective conditions and subjective assessments; that is, while lone parents tend to experience a less than favourable housing situation, Bradshaw & Millar (91) found that most lone parents considered that their current housing situation had *improved.* The potential for the external/internal line of enquiry that the thesis seeks to pursue is readily apparent.

2.5 LONE PARENT FAMILY LIFE

Much social science research considers the experience of life in lone parent families. There are two approaches to study:

1) *Outsiders' Perception*: Others' opinion of lone parent families (particularly in relation to their childrearing capabilities) have been canvassed.
2) *Insiders' Experience*: The reality of life in a lone parent family has been considered from the perspective of the child(ren), parent(s) and the child-parent relationship.

2.5.1 ATTITUDES TOWARD THE LONE PARENT FAMILY

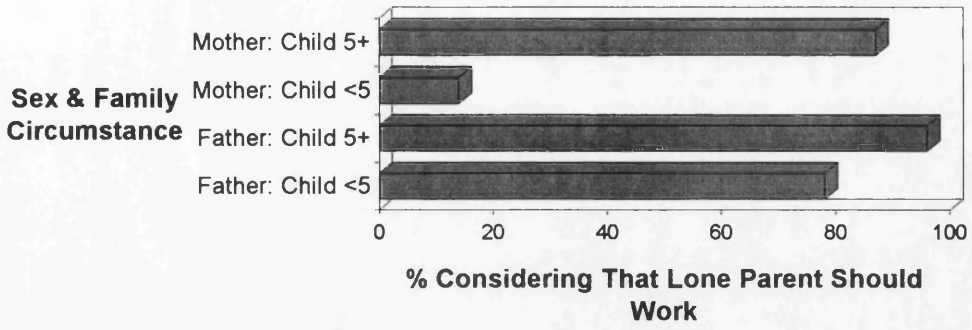
The Social and Community Planning Research organisation (hereafter, S.C.P.R.) have undertaken a survey of British Social Attitudes (hereafter, B.S.A.) on an annual basis since 1983 (SCPR various). The B.S.A. survey monitors long term changes in values. It has canvassed public opinion on the relative deservedness of lone parents as recipients of social welfare benefits, the responsibilities of parents and the ability of a lone parent to raise children. Similar issues have been addressed by MacKay et al (72) and Taylor-Gooby (85).

2.5.1a Responsibilities of Parents

Whether or not lone parents should work (MacKay et al 72) has been considered. The age of the youngest child and the gender of the parent have a critical bearing on whether public opinion favours working lone parents (MacKay et al 72). As Figure 2.11 demonstrates, the majority consider that lone mothers should stay at home if the youngest child is under five years of age (pre-school age), but that they should be working if the youngest child is of school age. More people are of the opinion that the male lone parent should work, regardless of the age of the youngest child. Survey respondents' explanations for their opinion, reinforce the importance of gender; MacKay et al (72, p.80) noted a concern that female lone parents should only work if it is convenient for them. In contrast, there was less tolerance of male preference and a greater concern over welfare dependency.

Figure 2.11

Attitudes Toward Lone Parents and Work: Lone Parents By Sex And Age Of Youngest Dependent Child (Great Britain 1972)



Source: MacKay et al (72)

Figure 2.12

Attitudes Toward The Capability Of Lone Parents

a) Lone Parents By Gender Compared To Two Parent Families **(Relative Capability-direct)**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
If lone parent is a man	4.5	25.9	16.9	41.6	9.0
If lone parent is a women	2.9	21.1	17.5	44.4	12.4

Source: British Social Attitudes Survey (1989)

b) Meeting Their Children's Needs: Lone Parents By Gender **(Absolute Capability-direct)**

Can a lone parent provide adequately for all a children's needs (Percentage saying yes)?

If lone parent is a man	**********	64% (*=2%)
If lone parent is a woman	**********	72% (*=2%)

Source: MacKay et al (72, p.86)

c) Perceived Happiness Of Children In Lone Parent Families **(Absolute Capability-indirect)**

To grow up happily, children need a home with both their own father and mother?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
61.3	17.1	8.6	8.2	4.1

Source: British Social Attitudes Survey (1986)

2.5.1b Capabilities of Parents

The perceived childrearing capabilities of lone parent families has been approached relatively (estimating 'performance' against two-parent families) and absolutely (estimating if their child's needs are being fulfilled). In the 1987 B.S.A. survey (SCPR 89), respondents were asked whether they thought children in lone parent families would be as happy as those in two parent families; as Figure 2.12a shows, there is an overwhelming feeling that children in lone parent families would be less happy. This negative portrayal of lone parent families was further reinforced by the perceived capability of male and female lone parents to 'bring up their child' compared against a two parent family. As Figure 2.12b shows, most regard two parent families as being more capable. There are virtually no differences between male and female lone parents, although, if anything, males were perceived as being more capable. This contrasts with the earlier findings of MacKay et al (72) who found that, *providing the lone parent had an adequate income level*:

1) Lone parents could provide adequately for their children's' needs.
2) Women were more able than men (Figure 2.12c).

Thus, it is unclear whether public opinion considers lone parents to be as, or less, capable than two parent families of raising children. The conflicting opinions could be attributed to differences in the provisos made; unlike the B.S.A. survey, MacKay et al (72) asked respondents to qualify their opinions on the basis that the lone parent had a reasonable income. That is, the B.S.A. respondents recognised and accounted for the fact that most lone parents do not have an adequate income level (see section 2.4.1) which, in turn, leads B.S.A. respondents to doubt their ability to provide for their family needs. However, other, equally plausible explanations could also be proposed. For example, there was a gap of seventeen years between these studies; the conflicting opinions could reflect that opinions and/or the capabilities of the lone parent population have changed in the intervening years. What cannot be denied, however, is that greater sensitivity in question formulation is required in the future to ensure that more confident assertions can be drawn from research findings.

2.5.1c Deserving Poor?

The targeting of welfare resources is based on an assessment of which groups are most deserving of welfare payments. The B.S.A. survey usually includes such a question, i.e. comparing single parents with old age pensioners (pensions), children (child benefit), the unemployed and the disabled. In each survey, single parents have been judged the least deserving of welfare payments. A similar exercise was conducted by Taylor-Gooby (85), in which respondents compared eight welfare *services*. Information was provided on the social security budget that is spent on each. The results differed markedly from the B.S.A. survey; single parent benefits were the fourth most favoured and were the second most favoured of the five B.S.A. groups; 43% considered that the level of

Table 2.5

Deserving Poor : Provision Of Welfare Services

Service	Percentage agreeing that service should be: provided by the state	available to all members	not restricted by income	not restricted by how one came to be in need	not restricted by available family support	at or near average wage level
Old Age Pensions	99 (1=)	62 (2=)	63 (2=)	-	92 (1=)	79 (1=)
Disabled/Sick	98 (1=)	73 (2=)	60 (2=)	-	-	82 (1=)
Old Persons Homes	98 (1=)	75 (2=)	78 (1)	-	73 (3=)	-
Home Care For Elderly	96 (1=)	64 (5=)	69 (2=)	-	42 (6)	-
Education	-	94 (1)	-	-	-	-
Widows Benefit	97 (1=)	56 (7)	39 (6=)	-	90 (1=)	80 (1=)
Employment Benefit	93 (6=)	31 (11=)	34 (9=)	28 (3)	61 (5)	56 (5=)
Low Paid Benefit	72 (8=)	36 (11=)	28 (9=)	72 (1)	-	50 (5=)
Lone Parent Benefit	90 (6=)	47 (8=)	12 (12=)	38 (2)	68 (4=)	76 (1)
Council Housing	-	45 (8=)	40 (6=)	-	-	-
Child Benefit	71 (8=)	34 (11=)	31 (9=)	-	-	-
Day Care For Pre-School Children	62 (10)	42 (8=)	42 (6=)	-	-	-

Source : Taylor-Gooby (1985)

expenditure on single parent benefits should be increased (35% even if this meant higher taxes) - only 5% favoured a decrease.

One plausible explanation for Taylor-Gooby's results is that single parent benefit required a very small proportion of the total budget (2%). Nevertheless, unemployment (5%) and child benefit (7%) required only marginally more resources than single parent benefit, but were considerably less popular. Indeed, more generally, there is no relationship between level of expenditure and support for services. Thus, 'priorities for extra spending' do not appear to have been influenced by the cost implications. That is, quite simply, they considered that single parents were more deserving of welfare support. The conflicting results are interesting, but unfortunately (and once again) the ambiguities of the survey instruments hinder the interpretation of the results.

Taylor-Gooby (85) also gauged opinions towards thirteen *sub-groups* of welfare recipients, which included those receiving widows benefit and lone parent benefit. Table 2.5 shows that widows (who are lone parents) are perceived as more deserving than the general lone parent population; 97% considered that widows benefit should be provided by the State, while (only) 90% were in favour of lone parent benefit provided by the State (column b). However, qualified assessments were also asked of each respondent (columns c-g of Table 2.5). Particularly significant was the finding that, for both widows and other lone parents, there is a feeling that benefit should be restricted to those most in need, e.g. little more than half (56%) of those surveyed considered that all widows should be entitled to widows benefit. The cause of lone parenthood (column e) is seen as being a criteria through which benefit entitlement should be judged; only 38% consider that this should not be taken into account.

Data interpretation is a serious problem to overcome when attempting to estimate opinions of the deservedness of the lone parent population. The issues are of sufficient importance to justify more research that considers the best way(s) to approach these questions. Presently, it seems that public support for lone parents is considerably higher than is commonly assumed by those who attack their right to welfare entitlement (see 2.6.2a).

2.5.2 EXPERIENCES OF LONE PARENT LIVING

2.5.2a Children's Experience

ADJUSTING TO LONE PARENT LIVING: Burke & Van De Streek (89) found that group counselling aided the adjustment of children to lone parent living and, in a study examining the interaction between family support and child adjustment, Friedmann & Andrews (90) concluded that lone parent children were no more of a problem than children of two parent families when they were cared for by a supportive adult. These conclusions are representative of the majority opinion that, *with adequate social support,* the difficulties of adjustment can be minimised.

There is also the issue of the extent to which the process is an adjustment to *lone parent* living or, more generally, an adjustment to *new family arrangements*. Shireman & Johnson (86), in a longitudinal study of children adopted to single parent and two parent families, found that the children adapt equally well, i.e. there is no evidence of any unique problems in adjusting to a *lone* parent family.

LIVED EXPERIENCES: What then of the child's experience of living within a lone parent family? Amato (87) assessed the effects of divorce and re-marriage on primary school children and adolescents; lone parent children, relative to the children of two parent families, were more autonomous, had more household responsibilities and were more likely to experience conflict with their parent. Furthermore, less control and punishment were exercised by the lone parent. This is consistent with much public debate that blames lone parents for the increasing degree to which contemporary children are out of control (but see McKendrick & Valentine, forthcoming). However, there was no incorporation of the extent to which the absent parent is responsible for control and punishment; responsibility does not stop when the parent ceases to live with the lone parent family.

Household responsibilities of lone parent children have been the subject of most attention (Grief 85; Peters & Haldemann 87; Hilton & Haldemann 91). Peters & Haldemann confirm Amato's (87) finding that lone parent children spend more time on household tasks than those from two parent families; this is the cumulative effect of a little more time spent on many household tasks. Grief (85) explored the differences between children of lone parent families, observing that older children, especially teenage girls, participated more. Interestingly, lone parents expected *less* help from their children than partnered parents. Thus, the reasons why more children from lone parent families provide household labour may reflect the sense of responsibility from these children; a characteristic that contradicts the 'out-of-control' thesis referred to above. It would be interesting to examine whether there *actually* is a greater need to control children from lone parent families.

Gender was the focus of Hilton & Haldemann's (91) study. Examining the household work undertaken by both adults and children, they found that boys from two parent families were the least sex segregated of all men in their household tasks and that girls from lone parent families were the least sex segregated of all women. The high proportion of lone parent households headed by a women may explain these results; the 'male' tasks are more likely to be undertaken by children in families without a male parent. Therefore, boys in lone parent families are more role-cast, in contrast to girls from lone parent families who are least sex stereotyped. The wider significance and long-term implications of gender configurations within lone parent families is clearly an area of considerable research potential.

LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS: Several studies have examined the long-term implications of growing up within a lone parent family. The single most researched theme has been the academic achievement of children in lone parent families. Results have been inconclusive. Marsh (90) contends that family background has little effect on educational attainment of high school children, once socio-economic factors are controlled. Watts & Watts (91) reach the same conclusion for

female headed lone parent families. The middle ground in the debate is held by Bosman & Lownes (88) and Milne et al (86). The former found that lone parent children do not reach average levels of attainment, but that there are differences between lone parent families; children of divorced families fared less well than those of widowed families. Milne et al (86) identify differences among lone parents according to family structure, age and the sex of the lone parent. At the other extreme, Myers et al (87), Krein (86) and Muller & Cooper (86) conclude that lone parent children have a lower level of educational attainment than children from other types of family.

Broader-based researches under the heading of 'competence' (Amato 87; Amato & Ochiltree 87) have been undertaken. Amato (87) observed that the experience of life differed between children in lone parent families and those in intact two parent and step-parent families. However, Amato & Ochiltree (87) found that this did not adversely affect the competence (e.g. their ability to control impulses) of the children within.

The implications into adulthood have also been considered, e.g. Krein (86) examined the employment experiences of lone parent children and two-parent children. The results suggest that growing up in a lone parent family only exerted an indirect effect on earnings, i.e. earnings in adulthood were lower as a result of lower educational attainment. Put differently, having controlled for educational attainment, adult earnings of children from lone parent families are comparable to those from two parent families.

In summary, crude analysis seems to suggest that there are differences between children of lone parents and others, with the former faring less favourably. However, the explanations for these outcomes, do not rest with family status; rather, they are associated with other factors which are characteristic of lone parent families.

2.5.2b Lone Parent's Experience

The experience of lone parents has received considerable attention outside academia (e.g. Watkins 89). Academic concern has focused upon two aspects of lone parent's life experience, i.e. overall well being and adjustment to lone parent living.

Comparative analysis suggests that lone parenthood is associated with lower levels of well-being; McLanahan (85) in a longitudinal survey of psychological well-being (hereafter, P.W.B.) from 1968-81 found that single motherhood brought about a decline in P.W.B. Similarly, Fine et al (86), in a comparison of lone parent, step-parent and intact families, found that lone parents were least satisfied in terms of anxiety, depression, child problems and familial satisfaction.

What are the features of lone parenthood that contribute to this position? This is a question that is yet to be resolved, with different research programs reaching different conclusions; Thiriot & Buckner (91) found that the nature of divorce adjustment was the strongest predictor of satisfaction; Duffy (89) found that education & income explained 66% of the variance in mental well-being;

while, Kissman (89) confirmed Duffy's result for income, but also found that increased social support and social acceptance of lone parent families contributed to a higher QoL.

Devillier & Forsyth (88) examined the socio-economic mobility of divorced women after relationship breakdown. In general, this was a negative experience, although differences in the rate of downward mobility were observed; the less educated and those receiving inconsistent (but not necessarily low amounts) of child support experienced more severe downward mobility. This factor has been completely overlooked in recent debates concerning the *Child Support Act* (2.4.2). Friedmann & Andrews (92) also found increased stress among lone parents after relationship breakdown, although children of lone parents had no more problems than other children. They found that the quality of parental support (lone parent's parents) was more important than the quantity of relationships in easing the adjustment of adults into lone parenthood.

Other work has adopted a cross-sectional basis for investigation. In their national survey of lone parents in the U.K. Bradshaw & Millar (91), asked respondents to specify the best and worst aspects of being lone parents. As Table 2.6 demonstrates, independence and freedom were listed as best aspects while loneliness, financial difficulties and coping alone with children were the worst These results are very similar to that of Schlesinger (91) who conducted a similar exercise with 55 Jewish female headed lone parents in Toronto, Canada; a sense of freedom (as Bradshaw & Millar) and the close relationship they had with their children were the most frequently cited positive aspects and loneliness and financial burdens (as Bradshaw & Millar) were the most frequently cited negative ones.

These latter points are significant; it is all too easy to overlook the fact that lone parenthood actually brings some positive benefits to those concerned. The challenge for academics and policy-makers alike, is to convey these sentiments, without ignoring the *material* and *personal* difficulties that lone parents must also overcome.

2.5.2c Parent-Child Relationship

Three perspectives have been adopted by research that considers the parent-child relationship, i.e. parent toward the child (parenting style), child toward the parent (e.g. child violence) or relationships with the absent parent.

PARENTING STYLE: Parenting styles of lone parents have been examined with respect to gender and sexuality. As women are traditionally responsible for childrearing, it would be expected that they would be more competent lone parents than men. However, research disputes this hypothesis, concluding that 'mothering' is not an exclusively female skill (Risman 86; Nieto 90). Risman (86) reached this general conclusion, but also noted that the custody route and financial position of the male lone parent has an effect on the relationship they had with their child(ren) and on their perceived satisfaction with his parental role; less conflict and greater financial resources, respectively, were associated with a more positive experience. Turner et al (90) compared gay and

lesbian lone parents. Sexuality was not considered to cause long term problems for the children. Indeed, a positive parent/child relationship and strong bonds were observed. However, lesbian lone parents were identified as having greater difficulty in reconciling their sexuality and parental roles.

Table 2.6
Best & Worst Things About Being A Lone Parent
By Previous Marital Status

	PERCENTAGE CITING EACH EXPERIENCE			
	Divorced	Separated	Single	All
A	B	C	D	E
BEST THINGS				
Own Boss/Independence	66	58	56	60
Freedom to do what you want	35	30	26	31
Own decisions for children	18	18	27	21
Peace of mind	20	18	10	15
Household quiet/peaceful	13	18	10	13
Money (coping/regular/own)	14	13	10	12
More time for children/self	9	9	13	10
Generally like it	9	7	9	9
More self confidence	10	7	6	8
Nothing	10	15	14	13
Other	8	7	8	8
Don't Know	3	2	6	4
BASE	623	283	522	1428
WORST THINGS				
Loneliness	57	50	43	48
Financial Difficulties	46	41	46	45
No one to discuss problems with	31	37	26	30
Lack of adult conversation	14	13	8	12
Miss being part of a couple	12	17	9	12
Socially hard by self	12	15	1	12
Worrying as children are growing up	9	13	9	10
Children need father/mother	6	14	7	8
Security At Night	5	9	6	6
Nothing	4	5	8	6
Other	12	10	13	12
BASE	605	278	504	1387

Source : Bradshaw & Millar (91, p.14)
Notes : more than one answer is possible

Parenting research has disputed widely held assumptions as to the capability of sub-types of lone parent. More work is required to compare the parenting skills of lone parents who vary by socio-economic status (are poorer people worse parents?), age (are teenage mothers less capable?) and home location (what local factors influence parenting?)

CHILD TOWARDS PARENT: The parent/child relationship has been examined in terms of daughters' relationship (Mutchler et al 91) and violence toward their (lone) mother (Livingston 86). Mutchler et al (91) found that teenage daughters did *not* have an empathetic understanding with their mother. Livingston's (86) survey of lone parents in Illinois, U.S.A. reported that almost one-third had been assaulted by their children and that violent families were most typically larger ones and ones where the age-range of children was minimal. Such work suffers from its lack of a comparative focus; the wider significance of these findings will not become apparent until it can be established how this experience compares to that of other family types.

ABSENT PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP: In the U.K., the establishment of the Child Support Agency to raise maintenance payments from absent parents has heightened interest in the relationship between the absent parent and her/his children. From research that was funded by the Department of Social Security (D.S.S.) to provide background information to inform maintenance policy formulation, Bradshaw & Millar (91) found that:

1) Children of divorced and separated parents were almost twice as likely as those of single parents to remain in contact with the absent parent, (65%, 71% and 38% respectively)
2) Women who were absent parents were one and a half times more likely than men to maintain in contact (72% v 56%).
3) Likelihood of contact was inversely related to the duration of lone parenthood (79% of those who had been an absent parent for less than six months maintained contact, compared to only 43% of those who had been an absent parent for more than ten years).

Of those parents who maintain contact with their children, one-half saw them at least once a week, although one quarter saw them less once than a month. This is an important contribution to our understanding of lone parent families. Undoubtedly, the impetus provided by the *Child Support Act* will generate more research and further knowledge on the basic facts surrounding absent parents and their children. However, work must look beyond quantity (of contact time and financial support) and examine the implications this has upon lone parent family life.

The importance of such contact is not limited to the children; Grief (87) found that lone fathers had a better relationship with their children when the child's mother maintained contact. However, contact with the absent parent can also have negative effects; Rose (92) found that the absent parent was viewed negatively by those children who maintained contact. This contrasts with positive feelings and fantasising about the absent parent from those children who had no contact.

This review of lone parent family life has covered some significant points. Many of the insights have been counter-intuitive, e.g. that the children of gay & lesbian parents are not adversely affected. Other insights have broken new ground, e.g. the finding that the father's relationship with his child(ren) actually *improves* when contact with the absent mother is maintained. However, the key

finding is that, once again, the results also reinforce the emerging theme of diversity among lone parents; this is particularly evident with respect to previous marital status (e.g. with regard to the educational achievement of schoolchildren).

2.5.3 CONCLUSION

What lessons are to learned from existing knowledge on lone parent family life? What directions must research in this field now pursue? First, it is clear that this is a complex issue; many lines of inquiry lead to conflicting conclusions, e.g. implications of lone parent families on educational achievement. There is an obvious need for rigorous methodological specification and careful research programmes to resolve these issue. Second, the research in this field is important as it challenges many of the stereotype images of lone parents; further research and wider dissemination of these insights would be particularly useful. Third, a specific issue worthy of more research is the gender configurations within the lone parent family. As research on household responsibilities has shown, the experiences of children from lone parent families differ from those of children of other families in this area, but more significantly, the experiences differ according to gender. The reduced gender stereotyping of girls and the increased gender stereotyping of boys are suggestive of many more detailed lines of enquiry that should be pursued; are girls from lone parent families more capable than girls from other family configurations? Do boys from lone parent families show *greater* commitment to family life given their higher level of responsibility within the family. Clearly, the experiences can have positive outcomes, in addition to (or rather than) the negative outcomes that are more commonly assumed. Lone parent family life may not be the social ill that is commonly assumed by wider society; yet, as is now discussed this train of thought is one which underlies much of the policy proposals regarding lone parenthood.

2.6 POLICY

2.6.1 DEFINING THE ISSUES

A policy focus is a prominent feature of academic research on lone parenthood. Recommendations have been made across a wide range of social policy domains, e.g. transportation (Robertson 84), social work (Kissman 91) and housing (McKendrick 94). Underlying this work are three idealised positions that define the nature of the lone parent problem :

1) *Lone Parents* Are The Problem : Policy aims to reduce the number of lone parent families and/or the number of lone parents on welfare benefit.
2) *Poverty* Is The Problem : Policy aims to tackle the hardships faced by lone parent families.
3) *Others* Are The Problem : The unfair treatment of lone parent families in society must be overcome. The lone parent family is portrayed as a viable and acceptable family unit. Equality of treatment with the two parent family is the policy objective.

These are, of course, simplified positions. In practice, policy objectives often entail dual (or even multiple) positions, and the means proposed to achieve a particular policy goal have implications beyond its immediate objective. To demonstrate the complexity of lone parent policy formulation, one particular example is discussed: Ermisch's prescription in his concluding chapter '*Prospects and Policies*' of his book 'Lone Parenthood: An Economic Analysis' (Ermisch 91). Two of the three positions feature prominently in Ermisch's conclusion, i.e. lone parents as the problem and poverty as the problem. Ermisch (91, p.165) perceives a direct link between them:

> *" The issue of poverty and its primary source, the lack of a father's income, and the possible inter-generational effects of spending part of childhood in a one-parent family both point to the need for policies that reduce the number of one-parent families. "*

Clearly, Ermisch positions himself against the lone parent family, i.e. he perceives a need to reduce lone parent families, but he also recognises that poverty is a key problem. Beyond the specification of the problem, there are also complexities within the prescribed solution, i.e. the strategies he proposes contains elements that would appeal to protagonists of each idealised position. Ermisch's strategy involves: tightening the divorce laws to reduce the number of lone parents (lone parents as problem); targeting benefits to those most in need (poverty as the problem); and, while the provision of child care facilities is raised as a means to increase labour market participation and hence reduce poverty levels, this is high on the list of priorities of those who argue that lone parents should be better accommodated in society (society as the problem). Thus, policy solutions may produce contradictory results in terms of the policy-maker's outlook on lone parenthood. Having identified

the complex nature of lone parent policy debates, attention is focused on each particular approach. An awareness of the wider implications of particular strategies is maintained throughout.

2.6.2 LONE PARENTS ARE THE PROBLEM

" So what can the government do? It can provide material support for lone parents, but that is hardly recompense for a broken family. No, what the Government must do is to encourage the stability of the family, to strengthen relationships between parents and children.

(Kenneth Baker, then Chairman of the Conservative Party 1990)

While factions within the Conservative Party have been forthright in their condemnation of the lone parent family and have been vigorous in the promotion of so-called 'pro-family' policies (Wicks 91), others are more subtle:

" There can be no doubt that in many countries, single-parenthood and poverty are closely related problems. "

(Wright 92, p.1)

Wright implies that single parenthood (meaning lone parenthood) is a problem in its own right. Similarly, Findlay (93), in a section of a paper entitled *'Population and the New World Disorder'*, contends that:

" The break up of Soviet society was evident not only in terms of the divergence of mortality patterns along ethnic fracture lines, but also in terms of trends in divorce and the number of single parent families. "

(Findlay 93, p.73)

The belief that lone parenthood is, in itself, the problem leads to policies that simultaneously encourage two parent family formation and discourage lone parent formation.

2.6.2a Discouraging Lone Parent Formation

Reducing welfare benefits has been proposed as a deterrent against lone parent formation. Bradshaw (89) asserts that, as income support is relatively secure and generous, this measure would have the intended effect. However, he makes the proviso that it would have to be a sharp reduction. Ermisch (91) modelled the effect of *increasing* welfare benefit upon the number of lone parents and concluded that a 10% welfare increase would only lead to a minimal increase, although the number of single never-married lone parents would increase most. However, fiscal policy is fundamentally flawed as it reduces the process of lone parent formation to crude financial determinism. As Bradshaw & Millar (91) demonstrated, the reasons for lone parenthood are much more complicated than financial gain (and see below).

A second policy intervention has been widely proposed as a means to discourage formation is a tightening of divorce laws. Assuming that the marked increases in divorce and re-marriage after the Divorce Reform Act are attributable to that act, Ermisch (91) estimates that if these laws were tightened or repealed then the increase in lone parenthood (from previously married partners) would be reduced by 50%. However, this alone would be an inadequate solution as the fastest growing cohort of lone parents, i.e. single never married (2.3.1b) would not be affected.

The manner in which the British Government has promoted maintenance payments has more to do with encouraging absent parents to accept their family responsibilities than with improving the financial position of lone parents (2.4.2). Consequently, the policy is an example of one which seeks to discourage lone parent family formation. It is too early to assess the effect of this policy on lone parent formation, but this will be an area worthy of further investigation in the near future.

Finally, marriage guidance services and family planning/sex education could be perceived as preventative action. Together, these would target all constituencies, i.e. partnered couples by the former and single persons by the latter. Indeed, Bradshaw & Millar (91) found that only one-in-nine single mothers who became pregnant before they were twenty, actually planned their pregnancy. However, Bradshaw & Millar (91) also found that some relationships are beyond the point of reconciliation and to suggest otherwise (and enforce marriage guidance) is to risk enduring the suffering of partners and children alike. Equally significant is the fact that despite improvements in the provision of marriage guidance and family planning, the numbers of lone parent families rose substantially in the 1970s and 1980s. Clearly, the policies aimed to reduce the number of lone parent families are not entirely effective in practice.

2.6.2b Encouraging Two Parent Family Formation

Some of the previous measures indirectly promote two parent family formation. Direct policy interventions are also available. The expansion of singles clubs and lone parent support groups provide opportunities for re-partnering. However, neither has been promoted in this respect either by the organisers of these services or by the social engineers. Even without active promotion, re-partnering is an important exit route from lone parenthood (Millar 89). Bradshaw (91) suggests that a lump sum reconstitution grant could be paid to compensate for the resultant loss of income when D.S.S. recipients re-partner. He justifies this financial outlay in terms of the long-term savings made from the welfare budget. However, this would be contentious where one or both of the parents were wage earners and would be politically unacceptable in any case. Indeed, it may even encourage lone parent formation in the short term (encouraging lone parenthood, with a view to re-partnering) unless provisos were incorporated within such a scheme. Pro two parent policies already exist in the field of housing. In view of what they perceive as bias in-favour of lone mothers, Wandsworth Borough Council in London give preference to two-parent families applying for public housing. Further research should be undertaken to monitor the implications of this policy.

2.6.3 POVERTY AS THE PROBLEM

Millar (89) in her book, '*The Poverty Of Lone Parents*', observed three exit routes from lone parent poverty, i.e. to gain employment; to re-partner and an increase in the benefit level. Alleviation of poverty through re-partnering is most appropriately conceived of as a positive side-effect of changes in family circumstance, as opposed to an option open to policy makers in their attempts to alleviate lone parent poverty. Furthermore, the previous section demonstrated the limited success of such policies. Therefore, only employment solutions and benefit levels are now discussed.

2.6.3a Employment Solutions

Steps to increase the labour supply of lone parents and steps to increase job opportunities have both been debated.

ENCOURAGE THE LABOUR SUPPLY : Increasing the earnings disregard (welfare benefits are reduced if income is above this level) is proposed by Bradshaw (89) as a means to increase labour force participation; a 100% increase to £30/week is suggested. However, as Bradshaw (89) himself recognises, previously such disregards have had little effect in the past. 59% of lone parents cite the lack of childcare provision as their main difficulty when the childcare disregard was operational. Furthermore, the monetary solution ignores the complexity of lone parent's labour market decisions (childcare, child rearing responsibilities etc.). It could even increased levels of 'dependency' if full-time workers opt for reduced levels of participation.

Most lone parent commentators stress the need for adequate childcare provision to facilitate lone parents labour market participation (Slipman & Hadjipateras 88; Gingerbread N.I. 91). In general, UK provision is relatively poor. Thus, childcare is not only a problem for lone parents. Ermisch projects that a 45p/hour childcare subsidy (one-quarter the average cost of childminding) would raise the proportion of lone parents who work by 15%. Ermisch's enthusiasm for this measure is further strengthened on financial grounds, i.e. the reduction in the welfare budget would be greater than the childcare subsidy. Indeed, the U.K. Government introduced a childcare subsidy for working lone parents in the October budget of 1993; however, as Weale et al (84) demonstrated, three-quarters of working lone mothers incur no costs, and among those who do, the average costs were minimal. Thus, it is the quality and convenience of childcare provision that is the main obstacle rather than the costs. Thus, it is as much a problem of provision as it is a problem of lone parent's ability to pay. While the recent initiatives of the Government are to be welcomed, there should be much concern over whether sufficient incentives have been provided and whether such an intervention can work in the absence of a co-ordinated childcare strategy.

INCREASE JOB OPPORTUNITIES : The Community Programme and Employment Training Schemes are British initiatives to offer work experience to the unemployed. Bradshaw (89) considers that such schemes would be more successful with lone parents if there were more part-time

opportunities, bigger cash incentives and if they were linked to Family Credit rather than Income Support. Similarly, Ermisch (91) does not consider such schemes to be a panacea for all problems. However, with the British Government known to be sympathetic to workfare schemes, similar initiatives are set to feature more prominently in the near future. In summary, while the concept of increasing lone parents' labour market participation is welcome, there are considerable practical problems in devising incentives that are effective.

2.6.3b Welfare Solutions

Increasing welfare payments is highly improbable in the current economic and political climate. Nevertheless, it is a potential option to tackle poverty and thus it is worthwhile to estimate what the probable importance of such a policy intervention would be. Ermisch has modelled the implications of increasing welfare payments and concludes that increasing non-labour income (e.g. childcare grants or one parent benefit) would be more efficient than increasing income support payments, i.e. the former would increase labour market participation (and hence enable lone parents to overcome poverty), whereas the latter reduces participation. Were the labour market implications of increasing non-labour income to be argued more forcibly, then the probability of such a policy being implemented would be greatly increased.

In summary, lone parents place significant budgetary demands upon the welfare system. Growing numbers of lone parents on benefit (recent and anticipated) ensure this situation will not change in the foreseeable future. Thus, employment based solutions to overcoming lone parent poverty are more feasible than solutions that are based on improving welfare provision. Research has consistently shown that lone parents want to work; *but*, that incentives have little effect on economic activity. These are not contradictory findings; the simple fact is that the constraints on lone parents' economic participation extend far beyond the financial domain. There is a need for greater sensitivity to the labour market needs of lone parents and for more imaginative schemes to facilitate participation in the labour market. However, creating a labour market friendly environment for lone parents requires investment (childcare being the most obvious requirement). Thus, the prospects for alleviating lone parent poverty look bleak for the foreseeable future.

2.6.4 GENDER AS THE PROBLEM

"... it is precisely because lone mothers are women that they have a high risk of poverty. "

Millar (92, p.149)

Feminist scholars argue that gender is central to an understanding of lone parenthood. The strength of this argument rests with the knowledge that an overwhelming proportion of lone parent families are headed by women (2.3.2a) and with the evidence that demonstrates that male lone parents do not

suffer poverty and deprivation to the same extent or intensity as women (Millar 89). Feminist solutions to lone parents problems have been proposed at a general level and for specific domains of life. Millar & Glendinning (87; 92) argue that his and her poverty are not the same, either in cause or effect. They consider that:

> *" The causes of poverty among women are the result of complex but mutually reinforcing threads, which have their origins in the limitations placed upon women by the current gendered division of labour and by the assumptions of female financial dependency upon men. "*
>
> Millar & Glendinning (92, p.7)

Arguing that historically women's poverty has been hidden within household summations (see Jenkins 91; Vogler 91), they call for radical structural changes to give greater prominence to lone parent poverty:

1) Re-conceptualise/measure poverty to account for the gender dimension.
2) Re-appraise political strategy, focusing on the individual rather than the unit; changing the perception of the man's role to be the sole/main breadwinner and recognising difference as the basis of policy, rather than liberal/reformist approach which misguidedly seeks equality.

Further attention must be given to lone mothers position vis-à-vis other women. Millar (92, p.155) recognises that there are similarities and differences between lone mothers and married mothers. However, when articulating these differences, she contradicts the central argument of her feminist critique, i.e. higher *family* income for married women is identified as the major difference (Millar 92) although she had argued vehemently against household level analysis (Millar & Glendinning 92). A gender-based interpretation of lone parenthood must overcome such inconsistencies. Furthermore, the positions of the lone father, absent parent and current partner (if any) must be incorporated into the discussion. Otherwise, the gender-based analysis of lone parenthood becomes but an extension of mainstream feminist critique, rather than a focus of attention in its own right.

For specific domains of life, feminist critique has considered, for example, housing and social support interventions. Watson (86) offered a feminist critique of the processes that produce and reproduce patriarchal relations in the housing market. Much of the argument refers to the implications of a patriarchal housing system for 'single' parents. Three problems are noted:

1) *Size* : Using Australian data, it is demonstrated that lone parents live in more cramped conditions than two parent families, reflecting housing managers (inaccurate) assumption that the lone parent family has smaller space demands.
2) *Allocation Policy* : It is suggested that lone parents are treated less fairly in the housing allocation process, i.e. frequently only given one offer of accommodation.
3) *Location / Nature Of Allocation* : Lone parents are poorly located relative to their needs, which housing managers deterministically define as carers of children. Consequences include a concentration in areas furthest from sites of economic activity and in high density accommodation with its concurrent lack of privacy.

However, the argument contains a number of contradictions and inconsistencies. For example, the smaller dwellings were previously considered to be a positive feature, reducing domestic workload and countering the capitalist consumption pressures. Similarly, the concentration of lone parents in dense, peripheral locations was previously perceived as an advantage, presenting opportunities for social interaction.

Kissman (91) outlined a feminist agenda for social workers for their interactions with lone parent families. Feminist social work takes an holistic view of the needs of the family system, i.e.. the lone parent family is a viable system that could and should be strengthened in three ways, i.e. realignment (internal organisation); by utilising external support structures and through empowerment. Kissman emphasises that lone parents should not to be considered en masse. Rather, as in multiple feminist standpoint theory (Harding 86; McDowell 92), interventions with lone parents should vary according to the life cycle of lone parent, duration as a lone parent and by economic resources. Kissman's agenda demonstrates a sensitivity to the experience of lone parents lacking in Watson's analysis.

The potential of feminist critique to provide insights into the condition of lone parenthood should be readily apparent. However, current attempts have been partial and have been riddled with inconsistencies; there is a need for more systematic scholarly feminist scholarship into the conditions of lone parenthood.

2.7 CONCLUSION

What contribution will the thesis make to this stock of knowledge? There are four ways in which the thesis will advance knowledge on lone parents. First, the *geography of lone parenthood* will be advanced. The need to consider the geography of types of lone parent (rather than the geography of the generic group) is taken up in chapters five (comparing the distribution of lone parents by character over space) and six (comparing the distribution of lone parent deprivation over space). Furthermore, the thesis will explore the importance of geographical context of lone parents' lives, i.e. the difference living in particular places and spaces has upon a lone parents life (8.3.3). Finally, the geography of lone parent migration is an area worthy of further investigation; this is examined in Table 10.14 (10.4).

Second, existing knowledge has *either* shown that lone parents are materially deprived, *or* that there are positive features of lone parenthood. The thesis shows a concern to *overcome* such *partiality* in a comprehensive analysis of the advantages/disadvantages of lone parenthood. The subject for this analytical approach is quality of life. The more general principle being that research can make useful contributions to knowledge without adopting an exclusively positive/negative basis for investigation.

Third, and following on from the previous point, the thesis will seek to expand upon existing studies that have shown that lone parents are not a homogeneous population; there are very real differences among lone parents. The thesis explores these *differences* in terms of their *outlook on quality of life*. These cleavages among lone parents are explored in chapters eight and nine. This compliments current knowledge that lone parents have different characteristics.

Finally, the thesis is concerned to report (and understand) *lone parents'* own *perspective* on their own situation. Considerable research effort has focused on lone parenthood, but there has not been enough work that has raised their research issues with the lone parent population directly. A concern to understanding lone parents' outlook is the central concern of the thesis.

CHAPTER THREE

QUALITY OF LIFE LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter reviewed existing knowledge on the subject group (lone parents) of the thesis. Chapter three now complements this by reviewing existing knowledge on the core concept (quality of life - hereafter, QoL) of the thesis. As with the previous chapter, the review pays particular attention to the geographical contribution to knowledge (3.2), prior to reviewing the key findings of the wider research community (3.3)

As for lone parenthood, QoL has been the subject of a substantial research effort and it was therefore necessary to devise a literature review strategy, rather than attempt an all-inclusive review. As the strategy has a critical role in the outcome of the literature review, this strategy is briefly outlined

1) *Overview of QoL Research - Bibliographic Record Analysis* : At a general level, the review sought to establish the broad objectives of, and key trends in, QoL research. Bibliographic record analysis was employed to these ends; the research output of social science disciplines were compared using abstracting journals (4.3.2b) and citation analysis was used to identify seminal papers in QoL research (see 4.3.2b for details).
2) *Overview of (Geographical) QoL Research - Re-Working Existing Reviews* : Methodological (Pacione 82; Rogerson 89) and empirical reviews (Rogerson et al 88) of QoL works in geography already exist (to which could be added the QoL reviews of non-geographers, e.g. Chamberlain 88; Larson et al 85). Such reviews direct the reader's attention to work which may be of interest and provide useful interpretation of the field of study. Nevertheless, a review is merely one author's interpretation. Thus, existing literature reviews of QoL were used *with great caution* to raise awareness of QoL research.
3) *Contemporary Review of Recent QoL Research* : All QoL work indexed by geographical and sociological abstracting journals since the thesis began were listed and works pertaining to the thesis were consulted. Thus was supplemented by an issue-by-issue review of articles published in *Social Indicators Research : An International and Interdisciplinary Journal of QoL Research*.

The QoL literature review begins by paying attention to the research efforts in geography (3.2). It is important to do so, given that the thesis attempts to develop this particular field of study.

3.2 GEOGRAPHERS AND GEOGRAPHICAL QUALITY OF LIFE RESEARCH

Geography is an integrative discipline, combining physical and human subject matter within one field of study (Hartshorne 39; Haggett 94). While the profession (correctly) argues that the benefits of this diffuse enterprise are greater than the costs and that geography holds a unique position within the academy (Johnston 91), two problems arise; the tension between core and specialisms and the definition of the subject itself. Similarly, quality of life research is an holistic project, sharing with geography the problems of maintaining the connections between constituent research themes and the central concept and the problem of defining its core concept. Consequently, the specification of geographical QoL research is fraught with difficulty. To overcome this problem, the following distinction is proposed:

1) *Geographers' QoL Research*: This refers to work by professional geographers which they themselves define as QoL research.
2) *Geographical QoL Research*: This refers to work that is concerned with the spatial or territorial dimensions in QoL research.

In turn:

1) Geographers may undertake geographical or non-geographical research.
2) Geographical research may be produced by geographers or non-geographers.

In the QoL literature, a distinction can be drawn between those studies which are consciously concerned with space (aware of spatial/territorial variation) and those for which space is not perceived to be a relevant concern (despite the significance of geography). This is the criterion used to identify geographical QoL research; it is a reflection on the *prominence* of the geographical in QoL research. Initially, participation rates are discussed (3.2.1); thereafter, attention is given to the seminal contributions in the study of QoL in geography (3.2.2) and finally, the nature of geographical QoL research is considered.

3.2.1 PARTICIPATION RATES

Geographers practised research on QoL-related issues long before the emergence of the social indicators movement in the late 1960s/ early 1970s (e.g. Watson 51). Geographical QoL research has an even longer heritage, (e.g. Thorndike 39). However, these studies pre-date the QoL concept and indeed, were working toward different research goals than contemporary QoL research, i.e. QoL was not an end in itself. Thus, it is more accurate to claim that geographers have been undertaking (identifying with) QoL research for over two decades, i.e. since the early involvement in territorial

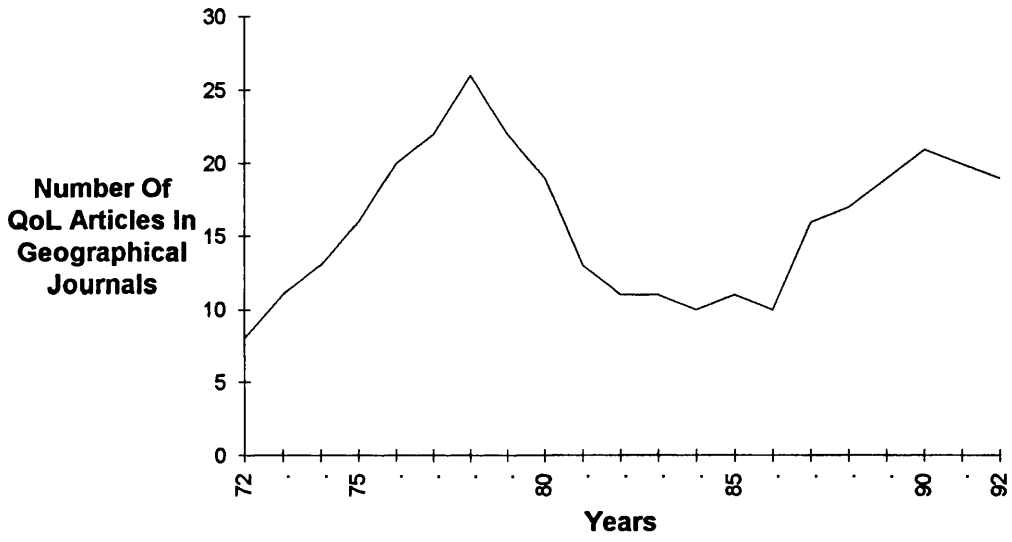
social indicators by David Smith in his years as a geographer in Florida (Smith 73). Other geographers who were early exponents of QoL research include Liu (74) and Knox (74).

As Figure 3.1 demonstrates, quality of life has been the focus of much geographical research since the early 1970s. Four eras can be identified:

1) *Early/Mid 70s*: The emergence of QoL research corresponds with the hiatus of 'welfare' geography, including works such as Paul Knox's "*Social Well-Being*" (Knox 75) and David Smith's "*The Geography of Social Well-Being in the United States*" (Smith 73).
2) *Late 70s/Early 80s*: A sharp decline coincides with the decline of 'welfare' geography.
3) *Early 80s*: A low level of research is sustained.
4) *Late 80s*: The re-emergence of QoL research reflects societal and academic concern with performance indicators.

Figure 3.1

Geographical Quality Of Life Research: 1971-92



Source: GeoAbstracts (1972-1992)

Thus, the thesis is contributing to an area of research that geographers have returned to of late. What then have been the major contributions of geographical QoL research?

3.2.2 SEMINAL WORKS AND MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS

There have been significant QoL contributions to the discipline of geography. All of the leading international journals of human geography have published QoL research in the last twenty years, including the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* (Helburn 82), *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* (Knox 74), *Progress in Human Geography* (Pacione 82) and *Environment & Planning A* (Rogerson et al 89b). Conferences have been convened addressing

geography and QoL (Pacione & Gordon 84) and books have been published on the subject (Smith 73; Knox 75; Cutter 85; Rogerson 94).

It is useful to summarise some of the key papers. The most systematic way to identify these works would be to conduct a citation analysis to determine which QoL papers have received most attention and/or influenced more of the research community. However, this is a time consuming exercise beyond the scope of the thesis.

A more limited appraisal would be to consider those cited most frequently by articles in *Social Indicators Research*, as this is the only academic journal devoted to QoL research. In this context, citation analysis is estimating the importance of geographers/geographical contributions among the wider QoL research community. Initially, important contributions were defined as those cited by at least two authors in the most recent three year period (1989-92). Geographical contributions constitute 8% of the total number of 'important' contributions (Table 3.1). Within these, all spatial scales are accounted for (column d) and no particular theme is dominant (column e). However, the vast majority of these were not authored by recognised geographers. Indeed, only two were the work of recognised geographers (col. c); Knox's (75) book on social well-being and Smith's (73) book on social well-being in the United States. Most concerning of all is that neither of these was a research paper. If this is accepted as a reasonable estimation of geographers' contribution to the wider research community, then it must be accepted that geographers are not performing as they should.

Nevertheless, while geographers may not be communicating with the wider research community, a substantial geographical literature has emerged. Most geographers who research QoL have only published one or two research papers. However, two exceptions to this rule are worthy of note. First, David Smith's involvement has been sustained from the early days of the social indicators movement (e.g. Smith 72) through to the present day (Smith 92). Smith's areas of concern have been the United States (Smith 73), particularly the South (Smith 85) and South Africa (Smith 92). Second, Michael Pacione published over twenty QoL research papers in the 1980's. Exclusively concerned with Scotland, Pacione addressed both rural (Pacione 80) and urban QoL (e.g. Pacione 86). Much of this work has engaged with policy debate (Pacione 87, 90a, 92). In addition to reviewing overall QoL as a concept (Pacione 82), he has undertaken specific applications on urban liveability (Pacione 90b), residential quality (Pacione 84a) and environmental quality (Pacione 84b).

To complete the overview of geography and QoL, reference should be made to the work of two departmental research clusters. First, the Department of Geography at Benin University (Nigeria) have produced numerous papers on social indicators and related themes (Salau 86; Okafor 91). More than any other group, they have attempted to integrate their work within the social indicators movement (Salau 86; Omuta 88: Muoghala 91). Second, the Glasgow Quality of Life Group (hereafter, GQLG) of Glasgow University have specialised in comparative urban studies in Great Britain (Findlay et al 88a; Rogerson et al 89a; Rogerson et al 90a). The group have contributed to methodological debates in numerous papers (Findlay et al 88b; Rogerson et al 89b). It must be asked however, whether either group has substantially advanced the research frontier. Public interest in the work of the GQLG was particularly great, but this focused on the league tables that

Table 3.1
Most Cited Geographical QoL Works : JSIR 1990 to 1992

RANK	No. CITATIONS	GEOGRAPHER	SPATIAL SCALE	REFERENCE
1=	3	No	Cross-National	**ANDREWS, F.M. & INGLEHART, R.F.** (1979) 'The structure of subjective well-being in nine Western societies' Social Indicators Research 6: 73-90
	3	No	City	**MORRIS, D.** (1979) Measuring the condition of the world's poor: The Physical Quality of Life Index (Pergamon: New York)
3=	2	Yes	Multi : Within Nation	**KNOX, P.L.** (1975) Social Well-Being : A Spatial Perspective (Oxford: London)
	2	Yes	National	**SMITH, D.M.** (1977) The Geography of Social Well Being in the United States (McGraw-Hill: Chicago)
	2	No	City	**CURRIE, R.F. & THACKER, C.** (1986) 'Quality of the urban environment as perceived by residents of slow and fast growth cities' Social Indicators Research 18: 95-118.
	2	No	Community	**DANIEL, T.C. & VINING, J.** (1983) 'Methodological issues in the assessment of landscape quality' in CRAIK, & ZUBE (eds) (Allman & Wohill)
	2	No	Cross-National	**INGLEHART, R. & RABIER, J.R.** (1986) 'Aspirations adapt to situations: But why are the Belgians so much happier than the French? A cross cultural analysis of the subjective quality of life' in ANDREWS, F.M. (ed) Research on the Quality of Life (I.S.R.: Ann Arbor)
	2	No	N/A (Review)	**KUZ, T.J.** (1978) 'Quality of Life: An objective and subjective variable analysis' Regional Studies 12: 409-417.
	2	No	Community	**MARANS, R.W.** (1976) 'Perceived quality of residential environment' in CRAIK, K.H. & ZUBE, E.H. Perceiving Environmental Quality (Plenum: New York)
	2	No	Community	**MARANS, R.W. & RODGERS, W.L.** (1975) 'Towards an understanding of community satisfaction' in HAWLET, A & ROCK, V. (eds) Metropolitan America in Contemporary Perspective (Halstead: New York)
	2	No	Community	**MILBRATH, L. & SAHR, R.C.** (1975) 'Perceptions of environmental quality' Social Indicators Research 1: 397-438.
	2	No	International	**MORRIS, D.** (1979) Measuring the condition of the world's poor: The Physical Quality of Life Index (Pergamon: New York)
	2	No	Cities	**SCHNEIDER, M.** (1975) 'The quality of life in large American cities: objective and subjective social indicators' Social Indicators Research 1: 495-510.

Abbreviations QoL - Quality of Life
JSIR - Journal of Social Indicators Research

they produced, rather than the more critical policy issues of why QoL varies so greatly between British cities.

3.2.3 NATURE OF RESEARCH

Given that geographers' contribution has mainly focused on spatially defined populations, it is not surprising that urban geography (e.g. O'Loughlin 83; Cutter 85) and rural geography (e.g. Gray 91: Jussaume 90) have spawned much research. Looking to the future, there is ample scope for geographical study based on particular population groups: population geographers' growing concern with households and population subgroups (Findlay 92) could lead to more QoL research, particularly with respect to migration (Champion 92). One branch of geography that is moving away from traditional quantitative QoL research is social geography; having taken a cultural turn in the mid 80's (Philo 91) and become increasingly dependent on philosophical means of expression and argumentation (Thrift 91) it would appear that QoL research, as it is traditionally understood, is less relevant. However, there have been suggestions within the study group to establish a Working Party to consider the geography of poverty which would undoubtedly re-address the contribution QoL research makes to our understanding of the social world (Social & Cultural Study Group 92). Furthermore, geography's return to social justice (Smith 94a; 94b) will centre QoL on social geographers research agenda in the immediate future.

What then are the key characteristics of geographical QoL research? Two research papers can be used to demonstrate these features, i.e. Pacione 86; Findlay et al 88b (Table 3.2):

1) *Scale* (col. a) Geographical studies have been conducted at several spatial scales. The two examples cover local, sub-area, city and regional scales. Other studies have undertaken, for example, international comparisons (Morris 79). A further point to note is that much geographical analysis is multi-scale in structure (e.g. Pacione 86).
2) *Focus* (col. b): As in the examples, most studies are concerned with spatially defined populations.
3) *Variable Type* (col. d): Both objective (e.g. overcrowding measures) and subjective indicators (e.g. appearance of house) have been utilised, often in the same survey.
4) *Holistic* (col. e): In common with non-geographical QoL research, most research provides an overview of life rather than an examination of specific life concerns.

However, less well understood is that there are three types of geographic study:

1) *Distribution of Life Quality*: Issues that are considered include; Where do the citizens who have a higher quality of life live? Which areas have a higher quality of life? here, the concern is with the geography of the QoL outcome.
2) *Geography of Life Concerns*: Issues that are considered include; Do people from different areas hold the same views on what constitutes a high QoL? Is it spatial (e.g.. neighbourhood) or aspatial concerns (e.g. work) that are most significant? here, the concern is with the geography in the process of producing the QoL outcome.

Table 3.2
Geographical Traditions In Quality Of Life Research

Scale	Sub-Population	Data Collection	Type of Variable	Tradition
A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**
Pacione (86)				
City	Census ED	Census ED	Objective	Distribution of Life Quality
City Sub-Area	City Sub-Area	Census ED	Objective	Distribution of Life Quality
Local	Elderly	Census ED	Subjective	Spatiality of Life Concerns
G.Q.L.G. (88)				
Regional	Scottish & South-East	L.L.M.A.	Obj-Sub	Spatiality of Life Concerns
L.L.M.A.	L.L.M.A.	L.L.M.A.	Obj-Sub	Spatiality of Life Concerns

Abbreviations - G.Q.L.G. : Glasgow Quality of Life Group
- ED : Enumeration District
- L.L.M.A. : Local Labour Market Area

Notes : see bibliography for details of articles

3) *Perceptions of Desirable/Unpopular Places & Spaces*: Issues that are addressed include; Where do people perceive that they will experience a higher quality of life and why? Here, the concern is with the disjuncture between QoL (as experienced) and QoL (as perceived).

In conclusion, geography has made substantial contributions in the field of QoL. The nature of these geographical insights have been multi-dimensional and the long tradition of research implies that these insights can be traced back through time. However, geography does not appear to be exporting its knowledge to the wider QoL research community, which undoubtedly is a loss to both research communities. This leads us more generally to the issue of what geography/geographers must now seek to do in order to advance the research frontier in QoL research.

3.2.4 PROGRESS IN THE GEOGRAPHY OF QUALITY OF LIFE

From the review, three research directions should be prescribed for geographers as they seek to extend the QoL research frontier. First, geographical QoL research must be *less insular.* This applies equally to geography re the wider research community (QoL research in geography has not made full use of the findings of QoL research from other social sciences) and across the different sub-disciplines of geography (there is not enough geographical QoL research that seeks to contribute to more than the specialist sub-discipline of the author). Geographical research (and most certainly the research of sub-disciplines within geography) is unable to provide *all* the answers; a greater willingness on drawing knowledge from and exporting knowledge to other disciplines (and other sub-disciplines) is a prerequisite for progress with scholarly geographical QoL research; as the discussion in 3.2.2 highlighted, geography has much room for improvement.

Second, despite the extensive research effort, there are still *niches* that have *not* yet been fully (or adequately) *explored.* Most apparent is the lack of work within the underdeveloped world. The reasons why this should be so are understandable; much QoL research relies on readily available data resources, the likes of which are not available outside the information societies of the developed world. However, this is a challenge to which geographers must rise; the population pressure that is being endured in the underdeveloped world requires that researchers should address the implications of this demographic change, not only in terms of the resource implications for the developed world, but also for the quality of life of the populations of these areas. Within the developed world, there remains the potential for more work at the finer geographical scales; as was mentioned for lone parents (2.2.1), the census resources for small area analysis have yet to be utilised to their full potential. Finally, geographers should, quite rightly, be concerned with the geography of QoL; however, this is not to imply that geographers must take a spatial basis for their research. That is, there have been few geographical studies that have considered a particular population group and examined how their quality of life varies over space (most look at the QoL of all population groups within a particular geographical area, although see Morris et al 88). Furthermore, the potential that this affords for inter-disciplinary analysis must not be overlooked.

Third, and perhaps most importantly of all, QoL research in geography needs to *re-appraise* the *approaches* to study. The quantitative basis and emphasis on simplistic summaries (although, in fairness, these are often the conclusions drawn by others) is fast becoming at odds with the shift within human geography (and the social sciences) more generally toward a more interpretative and qualitative approach. Methodologically, this requires that QoL research adopts new approaches to existing research problems (either in conjunction with, or in place of traditional quantitative analysis). Theoretically, QoL research must move away from the 'hard science' approach and engage with new possibilities using emerging social theories. This is not to suggest that QoL should reject its heritage; on the contrary, more sophisticated quantitative applications are as useful as they first were some twenty years ago. However, times change and QoL research should be receptive to such change and join the research frontier within the wider discipline. Only then will QoL research emerge from the geographical backwaters and establish a place at the centre of geographical inquiry.

3.3 QUALITY OF LIFE LITERATURE

3.3.1 OVERVIEW

In this section, the focus shifts from the particular to the general, i.e. from a review of geography and QoL to a review of the wider QoL research movement. It should be stressed that the geographical contribution to this general field is not omitted from the analysis that follows. Rather, where geography has made an outstanding contribution to knowledge (even if this is not acknowledge as such), due credit is given.

3.3.1a Research Trends

There have been numerous reviews of QoL research, both for the movement as a whole (Glatzer & Mohr 87; Johnston 88) and for specific disciplines (Wish 86). These reviews highlight that the hallmark of the movement is empirical research. However, beyond the empirical tradition, there have been shifts in emphasis. Initially, non-empirical work focused upon the definition and conceptualisation of QoL (e.g. Neugarten et al 61; McCall 75; Rodgers & Converse 75). While this is still debated today (Glatzer & Mohr 87), it has been superseded by a greater concern with methodology (Pacione 82; Rogerson 89).

3.3.1b Seminal Papers

Table 3.3 lists the ten most cited QoL papers in recent times. According to this estimate (see 4.3.2b for details), the two most 'important' contributions to QoL research were studies conducted by separate research teams at the Institute of Social Research at the University of Michigan (USA), i.e. Andrews & Withey's (76) analysis of social well-being and Campbell et al's (76) analysis of the Quality of American Life. Both were large scale statistical analyses of the situation in America in the early 1970s. The context of this research was unique, with two teams from the same institution working on the same issue concurrently. Diener's (84) review of subjective well-being is equally significant; more so, as this is a more recent paper (by some eight years) and has almost twice as many citations as any other journal article. More generally, most of the seminal contributions in QoL have originated from psychological research; five of the nine most cited articles are from this particular discipline (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3
Most Cited QoL Works : JSIR 1990 to 1992

RANK	No. CITATIONS	REFERENCE
1	19	**ANDREWS, F.M. & WITHEY, S.B.** (1976) Social Indicators of Well-Being : Americans Perceptions of Life Quality (Plenum: New York)
2	17	**CAMPBELL, A., CONVERSE, P.E. & RODGERS, W.L.** (1976) The Quality of American Life : Perceptions, Evaluations and Satisfaction (Sage: New York)
3	14	**DIENER, E.** (1984) 'Subjective well-being' Psychological Bulletin 95: 542-575.
4=	9	**BRADBURN, N.M.** (1969) The Structure of Psychological Well-Being (Aldine: Chicago)
	9	**CAMPBELL, A.** (1981) The Sense of Well-Being in America : Recent Patterns and Trends (McGraw-Hill: New York)
6	8	**PALMORE, P.B. & KIVETT, V.** (1977) 'Changes in life satisfaction: A longitudinal study of persons aged 46-70' Journal of Gerontology 32: 311-316.
7=	7	**ATKINSON, T.** (1982) 'The stability and validity of quality of life measures' Social Indicators Research 10: 113-132
	7	**McNEIL, J.K., STONES, M.J. & KOZMA, A.** (1986b) 'Subjective well-being in later life: Issues concerning measurement & prediction' Social Indicators Research 18: 35-70
9=	6	**CANTRILL, H.** (1965) The Pattern of Human Concerns (Rutgers U.P.: New Brunswick)
	6	**ANDREWS, F.M. & McKENNELL, A.C.** (1980) 'Measures of self reported well-being: Their affective, cognitive and other components' Social Indicators Research 8: 127-155
	6	**KOZMA, A. & STONES, M.J.** (1983) 'Predictors of happiness' Journal of Gerontology 38: 626-628.
	6	**COSTA, P.T. & MacCRAE, R.R.** (1984) 'Personality as a lifelong determinant of well-being' in MALATESTA, C. & IZARD, C. (eds) Affective Process in Adult Development and Ageing (Sage: Beverly Hills)
	6	**MICHALOS, A.C.** (1985) 'Multiple Discrepancies Theory' Social Indicators Research 16: 347-413.

Abbreviations QoL - Quality of Life
JSIR - Journal of Social Indicators Research

3.3.2 FOUNDATIONS

3.3.2a Definitions

As was noted in 3.3.1a, much of the early work of the social indicators movement was concerned with the meaning of concepts (e.g. Wingo 73). Papers concerned with pedagogical definition are still published, however these are mainly in the form of introductions to specialist books on QoL (e.g. Besthuzhev-Lada 80; Gordon 84). While this is a reflection of the considerable progress made toward terminological clarity (fewer papers - less need), confusion is still generated by some researchers who use different terms interchangeably and assign different meanings to the same term. However, misinterpretation of QoL work cannot be solely blamed on the authors. Take the two approaches to QoL that were identified in Table 3.2 (and see text of 3.2.3). The subtleties of their different research goals are often overlooked by critics of QoL research. Indeed, the Glasgow Quality of Life Group's survey (Findlay et al 88b) of Table 3.3 is an example of a QoL research project that is not measuring quality of life. This survey compared the different opinions of QoL held by the Scots and those living in the South-East of England. It also measured the degree to which different local labour market areas met the conditions that the average British adult citizen believed would contribute to a high QoL. It did not aim to measure QoL per se.

Confusion is exacerbated by the widespread (mis)use of the QoL concept outside academia; avowed improvements in QoL are used to promote consumer products (from washing machines to private houses) and are used to justify the implementation of social programmes (from employment training to amnesty for weapon submissions to police authority initiatives). In the public domain, QoL is a "*vague and ethereal entity*" (to borrow the words of Campbell et al 74, p.4) as it is variously used to induce consumption.

Nevertheless, those who debate the precise definition of QoL, broadly agree the limits within which QoL and related concepts should be used. Besthuzhev-Lada (80), writing in an authoritative volume reviewing QoL research (Szalai & Andrews 80), proposed definitions for nine concepts which constitute a conceptual framework of 'life in society'. The limits of application of each concept is outlined in Table 3.4.

Before discussing these components, a potential source of confusion should be noted, i.e. the misapplication of *value-laden* terms such as poverty, deprivation, injustice, inequality and social malaise. These are either *evaluative conclusions* drawn from studies based on one of the way-of-life concepts of Table 3.4 (e.g. an analysis of the standard of living in Scotland, leads to the conclusion that lone parents are more likely to live in poverty), or they are the *subject of study* in their own right (e.g.. the injustice of restricted opportunities for lone parents in the employment market). Even here, the research question is formulated after a study based on one of the way of life concepts (i.e. in the example. injustice is identified through an analysis of the lifestyle constraints upon lone parents).

Table 3.4
Definitions Of Quality Of Life and Related Concepts

CONCEPT	DEFINITION	INTER-CHANGEABLE WITH	RELATED CONCEPT	SOURCE
a) **Life**	Higher form of existence than matter	--	--	B-L
b) **Social Life**	Aspects of life associated with peopled society	--	--	McK for B-L
c) **Society**	All forms of co-existence of people	--	--	B-L
d) **Activity**	Functioning of an individual or group	--	--	B-L
e) **Way Of Life**	The consideration of the social life-society-activity relationship for a particular subject. Comprises of lifestyle, standard of living and quality of life	--	--	McK for B-L
f) **Lifestyle**	Behavioural traits	Style of Life	--	McK
g) **Quality Of Life**	Evaluation of the gratification which subjects derive from the degree to which their material and mental needs are actually satisfied	Life Quality	Subjective Well-Being	B-Lplus
h) **Standard Of Living**	The normative standard for a subject's material needs, as far as they are quantifiable	Living Standards	Urban Performance Environmental Quality	B-Lplus
i) **Level Of Living**	A factual statement of affairs of the fulfilment of a subjects material needs as far as they are quantifiable	--	--	B-Lplus
j) **Well-Being**	Gratification derived from the fulfilment of mental (perceived) needs	--	Perceived Quality of Life	McK
k) **Environmental Quality**	A measure of the degree to which an environment fulfils the needs required of it by a population	--	Standard of Living Urban Performance	McK
l) **Urban Performance**	A measure of the degree to which an administrative area fulfils the needs required of it by a population	--	Standard of Living Environmental Quality	McK
m) **Perceived Quality Of Life**	Improper quality of life conclusions drawn from only a review of well-being	--	--	McK

Notes : Column 5 - McK - definition by self
B-L - definition of Besthuzhev-Lada (81)
B-Lplus - modification of Besthuzhev-Lada (81) by self
McK for B-L - defined by self based on Besthuzhev-Lada (81)

Clearly, the value-laden terms are not synonymous with way-of-life related concepts. Yet, they are often treated as such. To ignore these differences would lead to a mis-specification of research goals and as such encourage undue criticism of the inherent value of the concept of QoL.

3.3.2b Theoretical Frameworks

CONCEPTUAL SYSTEMS: Figure 3.2 is a graphical representation of the links between Besthuzhev-Lada's (80) way of life concepts. This diagram shows how the research level concepts are related to the higher orders of life, activity and society. Way of life is the central link, i.e. a synthesis of standard of living, quality of life and lifestyle for a particular subject. However, four weaknesses are apparent:

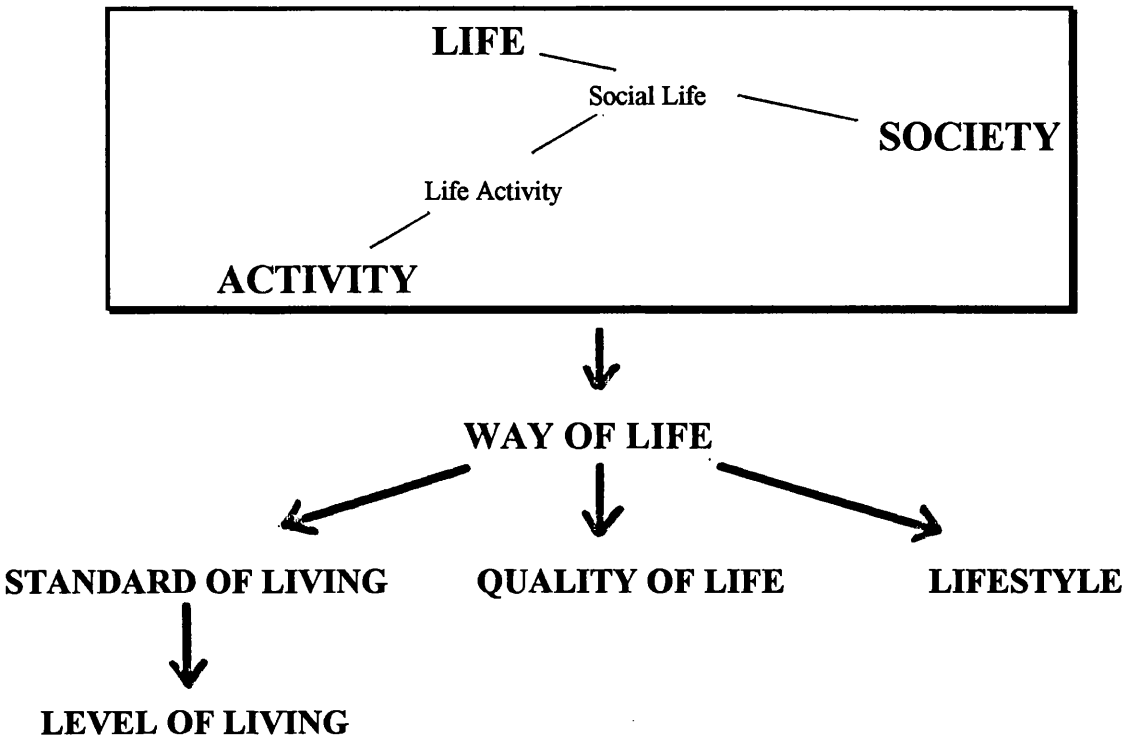
1) *Underlying Basis*: Besthuzhev-Lada does not make explicit the process by which individuals are assigned to groups.
2) *Semantics/Spatial Analyses*: Besthuzhev-Lada's formulation is equally applicable to spatially, socially or socio-spatially defined populations. However that is not made explicit in the text of the paper (Besthuzhev-Lada 80). The terminology used, i.e. he always refers to *people's* needs, tends to marginalise its utility for geographical research.
3) *Partial Development of Level of Living*: Besthuzhev-Lada proposed that level of living should be understood as a factual statement of a peoples' (subjects') standard of living. This avoids ambiguity between standard and level of living, but makes no progress in a more significant sense. when Besthuzhev-Lada defined QoL as an *evaluation* of gratification derived from needs satisfaction he implied that it is necessary to use an *external* assessment of QoL (such as level of living), i.e. an assessment by some authoritative figure who is not the subject, to *evaluate* the *internal* assessment of QoL by the subject (such as a measure of well-being). However, no indications are given of how level of living should be incorporated within. Indeed, his conceptual framework leads to the conclusion that level of living is of *equal status* to QoL and not merely a component of it.

QUALITY OF LIFE: Theoretical frameworks of the structure of life quality have been devised. There are two main approaches, i.e. the multiple-additive model (Abbey and Andrews 85) where QoL is the sum of the constituent parts, and the global model (Cantrill 65), where QoL can be measured directly, thus implying that the estimation is more than the sum of constituent parts. Evidence has been cited in support of each. It is not uncommon for both models to be applied in the same research project. However, it should be emphasised that the interpretation (not only the calculation) of QoL is as, if not more, important. The tendency to become embroiled in the global-versus-multiple-additive polemic should be avoided.

Theoreticians within the social indicator movement have paid much attention to the well-being (internalised) component of quality of life. In a comprehensive literature review, Chamberlain (88) outlines four means of disaggregating well-being into component parts that can be researched for the impact each has on overall well-being:

Figure 3.2

A Conceptual Framework For Quality Of Life: Besthuzhev-Lada (80)



Source: Besthuzhev-Lada (81)

1) *Affective/Cognitive*: This is the distinction between the emotional (affective) and the rational (cognitive). This distinction is most often made in terms of the focus of study, i.e. rational for life satisfaction and emotive for the experience of everyday life. Andrews and McKennell (80) pioneered a structural modelling approach to suggest that both components helped explain well-being. Most researchers find the experienced/judged distinction conceptually useful.
2) *Positive/Negative*: First identified by Bradburn in 1969 (Bradburn 69), this has been studied with respect to both the affective (Zautra & Reich 83) and cognitive components (Bryant & Veroff 82; 84). It is thus recognised that some components make a positive contribution to well-being, while others make a negative contribution. The correlates of positive/negative components have also been considered (Headey et al 85) as have the inter-relationships between them (Diener & Emmons 84; Diener et al 85).
3) *Frequency/Intensity*: First identified by Diener et al (85) as they attempted to resolve the debate over positive and negative components. Here, it is suggested that the impact of a factor on well-being can be defined according to the intensity of influence within a given time-period and the duration of impact. Chamberlain (88) considers that intensity only makes sense in the affective context.

4) *Inner/Outer*: Lawton (81) drew this distinction on the basis of a second-order factor analysis of well-being, in which one factor comprised of self-esteem, social anxiety, self-rated health, congruence between expectation and achievement (inner focus) and the other factor comprised of satisfaction with friends, residential satisfaction, perceived quality of time-use (outward focus). While these factors were not completely consistent (there were exceptions), subsequent research supports this distinction (Bryant & Veroff 84).

These dichotomies offer guidance over the selection of indicators for the well-being component of the QoL concept Thus, the construction of survey tools to measure well-being involves the researcher adopting a position (implicitly or explicitly) on these issues. As Chamberlain (88) has outlined, progress has proceeded eclectically with different studies using different bases of well-being. Indeed, one recent development has been to explicitly adopt a multi-dimensional approach (Michalos 85). However, there is a need for more critical examination and debate into the components of well-being. This is not to argue against a multi-dimensional approach; rather, such an approach must be shown to be both valid and useful.

In general, despite the understanding gained in conceptual and theoretical knowledge of QoL, there remains more work to do. The greatest problem, however, is less easily solved. That is, much of the confusion arises from the application of QoL concepts by non-experts. The most pressing need is therefore for more a precise specification of QoL from experts; this should improve the understanding of non-experts who conduct research on QoL.

3.3.3 METHODOLOGICAL CONCERNS

" One of the most pressing problems facing Quality of Life Studies is that of measurement "

Pacione, M. (1982, p.501)

"... the greatest challenge remaining is the application of Quality of Life research in public policy formation and in the understanding of the forces underpinning individual and group perceptions. "

Rogerson, R. (1989, p.34)

The opinions of two geographers - one from the beginning and the other from the end of the 1980s, and both arising from discussions about quality of life methodology - conclude differing priorities for research. Given the similarity of context and assuming accuracy of interpretation, it could be reasoned that the intervening years witnessed a maturing of QoL research, overcoming the practicalities of measurement and moving towards 'higher' goals of interpretation and application. Whilst the reality is considerably more complex, it is just to claim that a measure of methodological maturity has been attained.

In this review, the distinction is drawn between measurement and interpretation. Measurement refers to the formulation and application of methodological devices, encompassing indicator selection and the aggregation of components into a single index. As for other branches of social science,

interpretation is a theoretical appreciation of empirical evidence. However, interpretation in QoL research also refers to the process whereby external influences on QoL evaluations are estimated in empirical methodological study. Examples of such studies include consideration of cultural bias in cross-national studies (Veenhoven 87) and the examination of mood-of-the-day effects on response patterns (Moum 88).

3.3.3a Measurement

SPATIAL SCALE: Much non-geographical QoL research takes no account of the importance of geography. Yet, as Rogerson (89) has suggested, spatial scale has a critical importance on the character of QoL research:

1) *Definitions of QoL*: Different definitions of QoL must be employed according to the scale of analysis. In general, there must be more abstraction as the spatial unit increases in size; that is, national or international scales of analysis are concerned with societal goals, localised analyses are more concerned with the attainment of individual/group satisfaction.
2) *Selection of components to measure QoL*: The availability of information poses an additional constraint on the analysis of QoL at different scales. Thus, for example, measures of environmental quality at the national level may use access to national parks as an appropriate indicator, at the local scale, access to public open space would be more appropriate.
3) *Application of the results*: The policy implications arising from QoL research differ according to spatial scale of analysis. Thus, national scale analysis is applicable to national policy debates, unlike local scale analysis, which has more localised interest.

To ignore the spatial component is to become exposed to risks when research is replicated at another scale, e.g. a study that applies the findings of a QoL analysis for lone parents in Britain to lone parents in a peripheral housing estate of a city in Britain is fundamentally flawed by failing to recognise that one research framework may be irrelevant to another. Similarly, even when a research framework is duplicated in another locale of similar character, a failure to incorporate the local dimensions may undermine the results. Places (not only spaces) matter, and QoL research (as with all social research) must be sensitive to the difference place makes. It is incumbent upon geographers to share these insights with the wider research community, by raising awareness of the role(s) of geographic scale in (QoL) research (on definition, indicator selection and result application) a sensitivity to space & place in future work is more likely.

The selection of appropriate spatial units for analysis at a given geographic scale faces the methodological problem of selecting between administrative (such as Glasgow District Council) and functional units (such as the Glasgow travel-to-work areas). Rogerson (89, p.8) criticises the administrative basis given that it is;

" not necessarily related to the living and working patterns of the population"

Rogerson observes that functional units have become the "*most usual approach*" in recent comparative studies. While it is erroneous to claim that functional units are used more often than administrative units in QoL studies (see 3.2), it is just to criticise the validity of research based on administration units. However, this does not render redundant the *utility* of administrative based QoL research; policy decisions are often made for bounded spaces & places and QoL research that contributes to public policy debate is 'functional' in this sense. Indeed, Rogerson's first research after this commentary was as part of the GQLG's survey of the QoL in Britain's District Councils! (Rogerson et al 90a). Much of this project involved the preparation of reports commissioned by individual District Councils who were keen to gauge their performance, relative to others (e.g. Rogerson et al 90b; 90c; 90d). Thus, *utility in application* does not necessarily equate with *functional utility*, in the sense of geographical basis of study.

The fundamental problem of geographically-based analysis is that of ecological fallacy, i.e. where variation within spatial units is as great or greater than variations between spatial units. As Rogerson (89) explains for administrative units:

> *" Consequently, the spatial units seldom group together people living at the same (or similar) economic, social or environmental standard or of similar demographic characteristics "*

Functional units minimise this problem. However, these must be drawn on socio-spatial criteria, i.e. different population groups have different functional regions. At present the travel-to-work concept (one of the best examples of a functional region; Coombes et al 82) ignores the lifeworlds of less mobile sections of the population, e.g. lone mothers from towns on the margins of the functional region (outside the city) who do not have the physical means nor the material resources to partake of the opportunities within the functional region. Just as QoL should be measured at various scales, so it should recognise that different functional regions are applicable for different population groups.

INDICATOR SELECTION: The selection of variables (indicators of QoL) has been shown to influence the results (Gehrmann 78). Three aspects of indicator selection have been considered: First, much debate has focused on the type of indicators used. This is a theoretical issue, related to how QoL is conceived. Section 3.3.2b considered this point and drew attention to the four dichotomous (dimensions) identified by QoL researchers.

Second, discussion has focused on whether indicators should be applied consistently or whether they should be allowed to vary according to subject of study. Rogerson (89) hints that the discrepancies between lists of major life concerns (Johnston 88; Boyer & Savageau 81; Pacione 80) is evidence that a more flexible approach to indicator selection is required. Others have demonstrated that different socio-economic groups (Campbell et al 76) spatial frameworks (Pacione 82) and different applications of QoL, e.g. policy-oriented versus academic theorising (Concoran 80), demand different indicator lists.

A third point of debate concerns how comprehensive the indicator list should be. At one extreme, it can be argued that as each individual has her/his own view of what constitutes a high QoL, the indicator list must be extensive to adequately represent respondents life experience. At the other extreme, is the concern only to identify the most important concerns of the population.

Table 3.5
Quality of Life Research For Lone Parents in Great Britain

GENERALITY OF SUBJECT GROUP	GENERALITY OF INDICATORS	NATURE (LONE PARENT EXAMPLE) UTILITY (OF RESEARCH)
A	B	C [D]
Sub-Group	Selective	NATURE : An analysis of selected life concerns for economically inactive lone parents in Easterhouse (housing estate in Glasgow).
		UTILITY : Input to local policy debates on specific issues for this particular sub-group of lone parents.
Sub-Group	Comprehensive	NATURE : A wide ranging analysis of the QoL of economically inactive lone parents in Easterhouse.
		UTILITY : Wide-ranging inputs to local policy debates for this sub-group of lone parents.
General	Selective	NATURE : An analysis of selected life concerns for lone parents.
		UTILITY : Input to national policy debates on specific issues for lone parents in Britain.
General	Comprehensive	NATURE : A wide ranging analysis of the QoL of lone parents.
		UTILITY : Wide-ranging input to national policy debates for lone parents in Britain.

What is the implication of the particular combination of characteristics that are used in a particular QoL project? Table 3.5 takes the polar types i.e. indicators that are of *specific* interest to a particular subject group as opposed to indicators that are of *wider relevance* (col. a) and a *selective* choice of indicators as opposed to a *comprehensive* choice (col. b). It is clear from column d of this table that the nature of the QoL project differs dramatically according to the basis of indicator selection; these differences are apparent by nature and utility.

Finally, debate has considered whether 'input' indicators (e.g. health care provisions) or 'output' indicators (e.g.. life expectancy) should be included in analysis. Rogerson (89) points to the inherent difficulty with input indicators, i.e. provision does not necessarily imply access. This distinction remains to be fully explored by QoL researchers, most of whom are content to acknowledge the importance of each and incorporate both in their analyses.

AGGREGATION OF INDICATORS: Having accepted the validity of a multiple additive model of quality of life, the methodological challenge of aggregating components into a composite index must be faced. The central issue is whether or not a weighting, proportional to the relative importance of each component, is incorporated within the aggregation technique. Most commentators favour weighting, although arguments have been raised in protest; Knox (76) and Seidman (77) argue, independently of each other, that there are insurmountable problems in ascertaining precise values to be used in the weighting process. Wish (86) develops this critique and argues for a disaggregated approach to QoL indices, thereby by-passing the weighting of individual components.

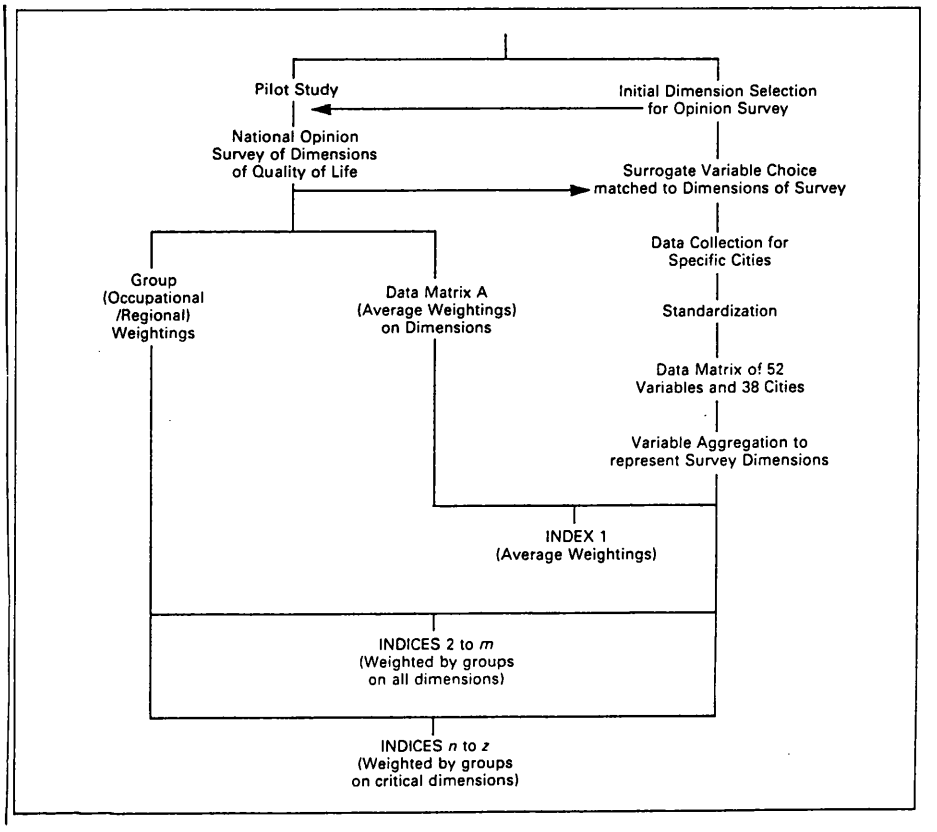
The elite-mass perspective is another prominent issue in the weighting debate, i.e. should weightings be derived from researchers and policy-makers (so-called expert opinion) or from the subjects of study? There has been more innovation and research effort in deriving weightings from elites. Two methods of deriving elite's weightings have been developed:

1) *Arbitrarily Derived*: Boyer & Savageau's (81; 85) studies of QoL in metropolitan U.S.A. were based on an arbitrary weighting system, i.e. as researchers, they made the decision as to what the weightings should be, based on their own knowledge field This aspect of the study was heavily criticised (Bell 84; Pierce 85; Cutter 85).
2) *Statistically Derived*: More objectively, a variety of statistical techniques have been used to derive weightings and produce composite indices (Gordon & Whittaker 72; Cheshire et al 86; De Rooy 78). Economists have conceived of weightings derived from statistical techniques in terms of the amenity price of a location (Blomquist et al 88; Rosen 79).

Recently the GQLG have devised a means of incorporating perceptual weightings into analysis (Figure 3.3). Weightings are derived from an opinion survey and are applied to objectively derived measures of QoL to provide a more realistic measure of whether specific locations were providing what the average British citizen wanted. The value of such perceptual weightings have been recognised by many researchers (Andrews 74; Campbell et al 76; Gehrmann 78; Johnston 88), although few studies have applied them in practice. The GQLG's weighting system is a useful contribution to QoL research and has been recognised as such by the Institute for Social Inventions. However, the group did not consider the tension between individual and group weightings. That is, rather than use the national weightings to weight local performance, a series of local weightings could have been derived for this purpose. This criticism is strengthened by the recognition by the group that definitions of life quality vary on a regional basis (Morris et al 88). Under a localised weighting scheme, the extent to which a specific location was providing the QoL that the typical resident within that location wanted, could be estimated. This point has more than geographic relevance, i.e. different weightings could be applied for different population groups; the findings of the GQLG that definitions of QoL vary between the elderly (aged over 65) and the young (aged between 18 and 24), provides support for this argument (Findlay et al 90). Thus, there is a need for greater sensitivity toward intra-group variation in perceptual weighting systems.

Figure 3.3

Glasgow Quality Of Life Group: Research Methodology



Source: Findlay et al (88b)

MEASUREMENT TECHNIQUE : A wide variety of statistical techniques have been applied to meet the requirements of QoL studies. The adoption of a particular technique will reflect the goals of the QoL study. For example, when the aim has been to reduce the number of indicators to a limited number of key concerns, principal components analysis has been used (e.g. Gordon & Whittaker 72; Pacione 85); when the purpose has been to compare relationships between groups of QoL components, canonical correlation analyses have been used (de Rooy 78). Of course, the level and nature of data will limit the range of analytical strategies. Given that many QoL (internal component) assessments are at ordinal or nominal level, the analytical options have, until recently, been more limited. However, with the innovations taking place in categorical data analysis (Wrigley 85; Knoke and Burke 80) there are more possibilities opening up for advanced level analysis. Above all, the key issue is that the selection of the techniques is appropriate for the purpose to which it is being put and that the data does not violate the statistical assumptions on which the technique is based. There is not, nor should there be, a single 'solution' to the issue of how QoL should be measured.

3.3.3b Interpretation

SURVEY RESPONSE INTERFACE: Several reasons have been raised for doubting the validity of the responses provided by QoL survey respondents:

1) *Spontaneous Response*: Respondents may not have thought about the items on the survey agenda and are therefore not in a position to provided carefully reasoned opinions. However, steps can be taken to avoid this problem, e.g. an outline of the interview schedule could be provided when the interview date is arranged. Self-completion questionnaires avoid this problem by allowing the respondent to consider each question without the time-constraint of an interview schedule.
2) *Deliberately Misleading Responses*: Respondents will offer misleading answers to disguise the truth for questions they would prefer not to answer. Once again, social indicator researchers have taken steps to counter this possibility. First, to foster a sense of confidence in respondents, the interface environment can be made less intimidating. Second, attention has been given to the manner in which sensitive issues are presented (Makkai & McAllister 92). Finally, checks can be incorporated within the survey schedule to test the reliability of the responses (Thorslund & Warneryd 85a; 85b).
3) *Unconsciously Misleading Responses*: Moum (88) has examined the impact of response acquiescence, i.e. propensity to agree with the researcher or to provide the response that the respondent perceives the researcher will expect. In this exploratory survey, Moum identifies response acquiescence as a problem for researchers. It was concluded that those of lower social status groups, older citizens and those with a lower QoL all exhibited a degree of response acquiescence. Having identified these groups, Moum advocates a greater sensitivity in survey application.
4) *Mood Dependent Responses*: Moum also assessed whether respondents' mood on the day of survey was related to responses given, as has been suggested by some commentators (Schwartz & Clore 83). In general, Moum disregarded the importance of mood, although he identified a tendency among young females to respond in accordance with their mood.

To ignore, or disregard, the significance of the survey response interface on the results would be dangerous practice. Rather, if the likely effects are specified, empirical research can and should take steps to control and monitor the possible effects.

PERSONAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL INFLUENCES: It has been suggested that, beyond the control of the researcher, psychological processes complicate the interpretation of results:

1) *Psychoanalytic Barriers*: Wilcox (81a) raises the point that self deception and repression of information impose much doubt on the reliability of survey data. This is a similar problem to that of response acquiescence, the additional difficulty being that controlling the survey environment will not overcome this factor. Nevertheless, Wilcox himself (81b) suggests that triangulation and interpretative devices can be employed to gauge accuracy and penetrate psychoanalytic barriers.
2) *Emotional Maturity*: Wilcox (81a) also contends that the stage of the respondent's personal development will affect the validity of the results (and hence interpretation). However, once again, he offers a solution to this problem (81b); deeper probing can help identify the degree to

which emotional maturity can affect responses. Clearly, however, 'deeper probing' is not possible where the QoL research is based on a questionnaire survey and thus, this may be an unavoidable problem for questionnaire based research.

TERMS OF REFERENCE: Four similar theories have been proposed which suggest that the interpretation of survey results should allow for the selective nature of respondents' comparisons, i.e. their terms of reference:

1) *Cultural Effect*: A geographical basis for social comparison is suggested by Ostroot & Synder (85) who propose that evaluations are culture-specific. In addition to the methodological problems of language interpretation and variations in how QoL is defined, it is suggested that cultural differences in outlook significantly effect QoL judgements. Veenhoven (87) in a re-interpretation of Ostroot & Synder argued that cultural variation is less important than they suggest and that where culture is influential, then it should be conceived of as an 'effect' and not a 'bias'.
2) *Social Comparison Theory*: Here, the focus is on the comparison people make between themselves and significant others. The consistent finding of these studies is that people believe that they (e.g. Crocker et al 85), or their social group (Janis 72), are superior to others.
3) *Attribution Theory*: This concerns event explanation, suggesting that respondents enhance their role in successful groups, and conversely, downplay their role in unsuccessful ones (e.g. Burger & Rodman 83).
4) *Adaptation Level Theory*: Adaptation level theory deals with the adjustments people make to cope with environmental changes. Brickman & Campbell (71) suggest that aspirations change to maintain an equilibrium QoL position. Under this theory, major life events would only have a minimal effect on well-being.

Headey & Wearing (88) incorporate the latter three theories in their examination of a 'Sense of Relative Superiority'. They suggest that selective comparisons are a contributory factor in producing high well-being ratings. At the root of these high evaluations are social networks reinforcing only the positive dimensions of life quality/role performance.

It is readily apparent that considerable research effort has focused on the measurement of QoL. While suggestions have been made for each aspect of measurement (e.g. greater awareness of inter-group variation in perceptual weighting systems), there is no glaring omission that research should seek to redress. Rather, methodological progress will involve modification of existing knowledge in an incremental, rather than a wholesale manner.

3.3.4 APPLICATIONS

Quality of life research is often perceived as a means toward public policy formulation. However, this interpretation is partial in two senses. First, public policy is not the only reason for practising quality of life research. As Rogerson et al (87, p.2) observe, there are two additional motivations.

1) *Public Demand*: QoL satisfies public curiosity about the nature of places. The media attention arising from the GQLG's surveys of the QoL in urban conurbations (Findlay et al 88a) intermediate cities (Rogerson et al 89a) and District Council areas (Rogerson et al 90a) testify to the public appetite for such information .
2) *Academic Agenda*: Pacione (82, p.509), in a comprehensive review of QoL research in the 1970s, observed that the major contribution of geographers was the introduction of territorial social indicators. Similarly, Helburn (82), in his Presidential Address to the Association of American Geographers in 1981, concluded that there was a need to explore the relationship between political economy and QoL. These concerns have policy relevance, but this is not the main motivation is to contribute to knowledge in a more general sense.

The second problem with the specification of QoL research as policy research is that the academic's interest in policy applications has been conceived of in numerous forms. Rogerson et al (88) consider that social engineering is a valid reason for practising policy oriented QoL research, i.e. to reduce inequalities. In contrast to Rogerson et al's *proactive* strategy, Helburn adopts a *reactive* position:

> *" Because quality of life as a policy goal is attached to place, it is a goal of which geographers must be cognisant. "*
>
> (Helburn 82)

Pacione (82), conceives of the relationship less directly. Indeed, he seems to suggest that policy is a by-product from academic inquiry:

> *" This offers another area of investigation with clear implications for social policy."*
>
> (Pacione 82, p.509)

PUBLIC POLICY APPLICATIONS: Much QoL research is relevant to public policy. Helburn (82) highlights seven problems in trying to apply QoL findings to policy debates, which can be reduced to three main issues:

1) *Nature Of QoL Research*: QoL research has been conducted without reference to the opinions of the people that matter, e.g. work has tended to examine access to amenities without actually considering whether these amenities actually matter. Furthermore, there is a tendency to be retrospective in outlook; contrary to the ultimate aims of policy-makers which are to match the needs of the population in the future. These criticisms could be overcome by re-focusing the subject matter.
2) *Problems Of Measuring QoL*: More fundamentally, incommensurate elements of life quality that are not amenable to measurement and cultural variation problematise application of results. However, Helburn contends that there are enough commonalities among definitions of QoL to make it a worthwhile project. These present technical challenges that may be overcome via methodological innovation.
3) *Unsuitable For Current Policy Practice*: This is evident at two levels. First, QoL research is not consistent with the economic rationale of policy, i.e. QoL is not necessarily dictated by

economic circumstance; yet, this strategy (improving economic resources) is the one which public agencies use to improve the lot of their citizens. Second, QoL is an holistic approach (it is not focused on particular issues); in contrast, tightly focused analysis is the very substance of policy research.

Nevertheless, geographers have specified a 'programme' for policy applications. Naturally, the spatial dimension is writ large on the geographical agenda; Pacione (82) calls for more local scale applications as this is the level at which much of life is experienced. He also suggests that population needs should be measured against the spatial pattern of resource allocation. Rogerson et al (88) call for research that highlights variation in QoL between spatial populations. Helburn (82) challenges geographers to "speak for place" and become involved in the design of environments, restoration of local power bases and to provide explanations on how the character of places contribute to an individuals' QoL. Helburn goes beyond this to outline an eight-point plan for applied QoL research; Table 3.6 lists these concerns, and provides examples of recent geographical research that fit each prescription.

Assuming that the problems of applying QoL are surmountable (for example, by following Pacione's [82] suggestion that more research is conducted at domain level), there remain two problems not yet addressed by geographers.

1) *Misunderstanding The Role Of QoL Research*: It is imperative that the objectives of QoL research (which vary according to the objectives of particular projects) are clearly understood by policy makers. Of course, not all geographical quality of life research aims to contribute to public policy, but where it does the objectives of the research must be easily understood..
2) *Communicating With Policy-Makers*: Despite the rhetoric, scant attention is paid to the dissemination and presentation of QoL research findings amongst policy-makers in civil society. Clearly, this is less of a concern when research is commissioned by institutions (e.g. Rogerson 88), or when institutions request a local report from a national survey (e.g. Rogerson 90b; 90c; 90d). However, most academic research is produced for academic consumption and it is misleading to claim that is 'applied' research. It is more accurate to state that such work has the potential to be applied to social policy. Application demands a different approach for a different audience. A more 'committed' approach to the application of QoL research is shown by Sung (92) in an investigation of the needs of families. Here, the identification and prioritization of needs are undertaken by family members (consumers of policy), key informants (deliverers of policy) and public programme directors (instigators of policy). By incorporating the role of each participating group within the analysis, Sung arrives at a more informed conclusion of the needs of families. Most importantly, however, participation in the research project raises awareness and interest from all persons concerned.

Effective communication of research aims is the single most important goal which QoL researchers must meet with respect to the application of their research. Without this, the ambiguities that already exist with regard to the QoL concept, will escalate to the point that the research serves no clear purpose. A second important point is that applied QoL research must purposely promote the

Table 3.6
Helburn's (82) Goals For
Applied Geographical Quality Of Life Research

PRESCRIPTION
EXAMPLE
REFERENCE

1) Reduce Alienation & Fear

E.G. Demonstrate how women's fear of crime causes them to restrict their use of space

REF **PAIN, R.** (1992) Space, sexual violence and social control: intergratting geographical and feminist analyses of women's fear of crime Progress In Human Geography; 15: 415-31.

2) Promote More Social Interaction And Cohesiveness

E.G. Outlining the socially and restricted communities of lesbians

REF **VALENTINE, G.** (1993) Negotiating and managing multiple sexual identities: lesbian time-space strategies; Transactions IBG; 18.2: 237-248.

3) Improve Aesthetics

E.G. Appraising art in space

REF **BONNETT, A.** (1992) Art, ideology and everyday space: subversive tendencies from Dada to Postmodernism; Society and Space; 10: 69-86.

4) Optimise Variety

E.G. Celebrating difference as expressed through postmodernism

REF **GREGORY, D.** (1990) Chinatown part three? Soja and the missing spaces of social theory; Strategies 3.

5) Provide Activity & Encourage Participation

E.G. Examining access to and useage of welfare services

REF **CURTIS, S.** (1989) The Geography Of Public Welfare Provision. London: Routledge.

6) Heighten The Public Interest In Private Land

E.G. Considering tye role of the state in encouraging more interest in/protecting rural areas

REF **CLOKE, P..** (1990) Rural geography and political economy; in PEET, R. & THRIFT, N. (eds.) New Models In Geography. London

7) Delay Life Threatening Decisions

E.G. Engage with debate on environmental threats

REF **O'RIORDAN, T.** (1981) Environmentalism. London: Pion.

8) Foster Ecological Health

E.G. Underststanding the urban environment

REF **DOUGLAS, I.** (1983) The Urban Environment. London: Edward Arnold.

application of results. The potential to contribute useful knowledge to public debate is quite different to actually doing so. Academics must show a commitment to this style of research, or, they should 'raise' their research horizons to the theoretical level; much published QoL research is neither, i.e. it reports empirical findings, without applying these results outside academia and without any obvious attempt to advance theoretical understanding.

3.4 CONCLUSION

How does the thesis advance the QoL research frontier? What gaps in the understanding of QoL does the thesis seek to address? Several avenues of progress are pursued in the thesis. *First*, it advances the geographical study of QoL by focusing on one particular population group, rather than (a) spatial unit(s). The potential for more geographical studies of this sort would be welcomed; not least of all as it brings geographers (and the geographical perspective on QoL) closer to the attentions of other researchers in the academic community. *Second,* the thesis aims to improve conceptual understanding of QoL. As was demonstrated in Figure 3.3.2a, current conceptual frameworks contain several inconsistencies; a conceptualisation of QoL for the thesis is constructed in 4.1.2b. *Third,* the thesis aims to contribute to the polemic that discusses the (de)merits of the multiple additive and the single measures of overall QoL. While much attention has focused on this issue, there is no real progress toward a conclusion. The LPQoL incorporates both bases of measurement. Thus, the inter-relationship between them can be evaluated on an empirical basis. *Fourth,* the thesis will explore the potential of QoL analysis as a means to examine different domains of life; as is readily apparent from the literature review, too much QoL research is concerned with the aggregate result. There is a need (which is now addressed) to explore how the quality in peoples' lives varies by domain. *Fifth,* methodological progress is sought by exploring the potential for an individual basis for weighting systems; the GQLG's innovative group based approach to weighting QoL was recognised in the review; however, the relationship between definition & evaluation of QoL at domain level has not yet been explored. *Finally,* the analytical strategy of focusing on the positive findings is the main approach to QoL analysis, i.e. the significant, or more accurately, the most significant explanations for QoL are the only ones that are discussed. Here, the retention of explanations which appear to be significant (statistically significant and with a plausible causal explanation), but which multi-variate analysis demonstrates to be non-explanatory, is a key contribution to the understanding of the distribution of QoL among lone parents.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

4.1 GROUNDING THE EMPIRICAL : WHAT IS QUALITY OF LIFE RESEARCH?

The aim of this section is to outline the theoretical basis of the thesis. Three aspects are considered, i.e. the conceptual framework (4.1.1), the quality of life concept (4.1.2) and the philosophy of QoL (4.1.3).

4.1.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

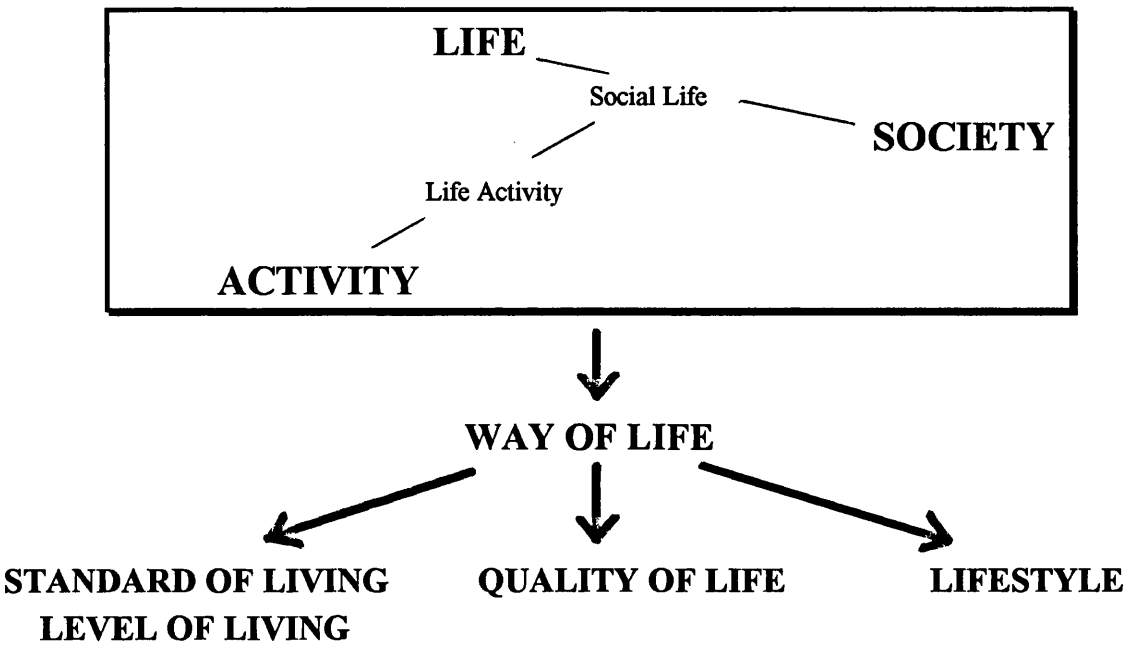
QoL is often confused with (and/or used instead of) other concepts, such as, for example, standard of living, way of life, etc. This is most unhelpful and should be avoided by specifying the limits of application for these concepts. One such attempt was discussed in the previous chapter (3.3.2b), i.e. Besthuzhev-Lada's conceptual framework of life-in-society (Table 3.4, Figure 3.2). While this was an improvement on existing knowledge, it was argued that Besthuzhev-Lada's framework was flawed in several respects; Figure 4.1b incorporates four changes to provide a more coherent conceptual framework for the thesis:

1) *Subject of Study*: Besthuzhev-Lada did not specify the process by which individuals are assigned to groups, i.e. it was unclear whether individuals could be assigned to more than one group (be the subject in more than one QoL study with different groups). The revised conceptualisation makes it clear that individuals *can* be assigned to more than one subject grouping, e.g. a lone parent is also a parent, either a man/woman, an urbanite/ruralite. and will therefore be considered as part of these more general populations in other QoL studies. This clarification recognises the complexity of social categorisation (Smith 91) and emphasises the need for careful consideration of the validity of the subject group.
2) *Spatial Analyses*: Besthuzhev-Lada's formulation is equally applicable to spatially, socially and socio-spatially defined populations. However, the geographical basis of subject specification is marginalised by references throughout his paper to *people's* needs. In the revised schemata, the potential for spatially based inquiry is emphasised by referring to the needs of a *subject* group,.
3) *Re-Specification of Level of Living*: Besthuzhev-Lada suggested that level of living was one of two *constituent* components of QoL. However, he accorded *equal* status to level of living and QoL within his broader conceptual framework. The role of level of living as a component of QoL is clarified in the revised diagram. The distinction Besthuzhev-Lada drew between standard and level of living is also maintained.
4) *Lower Order Reconceptualisation*: Comparison of parts a) and b) of Figure 4.1 demonstrate extensive change in the lower orders. At the root of these changes is the shift away from a subjective-objective division between third order components, i.e. where standard of living is

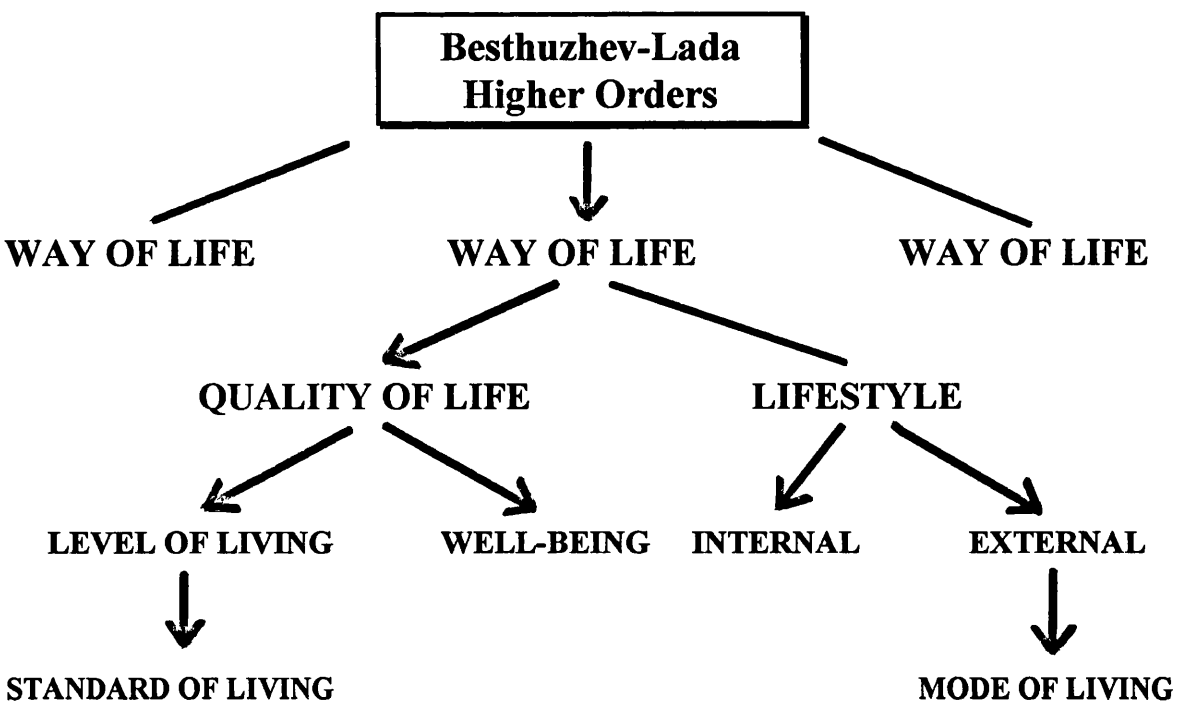
Figure 4.1

A Conceptual Framework For Quality Of Life Research

a) Besthuzhev-Lada (80)



b) Thesis



objective at one extreme, lifestyle was subjective at the other and quality of life was an objective evaluation of a subjective position. In the model adopted in the thesis, way of life consists of a behavioural component (lifestyle) and an experiential component (quality of life). In turn, each of these (third order) components is the product of an internal dimension (analysis of the subject) and an external dimension (comparative perspective). It must be emphasised that the internal/external dichotomy now employed does not equate with the objective/subjective dichotomy of Besthuzhev-Lada, i.e. the former concerns the *focus* of the research (broader comparison or specific sub-group examination), whereas the latter concerns *methodological approach* (measuring reality or perception). By definition, the external dimensions will be objectively measured, whereas the internal dimensions are best explained by combining objective and subjective analysis.

How does this conceptual framework compare to others used by geographers? The revised conceptual framework challenges Michael Pacione's four-dimensional model from his 1982 *Transactions* paper, (Figure 4.2). His compartmentalisation of quality of life into levels of specificity, time slices and geographical scales is a helpful indication of what a quality of life study should involve (particularly the recognition of a spatial dimension which is frequently overlooked by non-geographers). However, for reasons provided above, it is more appropriate to invoke an internal/external division rather than the objective/subjective division that is central to Pacione's framework. The revised framework facilitates systematic study of QoL by specifying exactly what it consists of. That is, as a study of QoL, the thesis involves an external assessment (a comparative focus) and an internal assessment (a detailed examination). The external assessment compared lone parent households to other households in terms of the prevalence of deprivation (6.2). The 'objective' internal assessment examines, in some detail, the nature of lone parent deprivation from the above analysis (6.3), while the 'subjective' internal assessment, the core of the thesis, is based on a population needs assessment by lone parents across a wide range of life concerns (e.g. 6.4).

4.1.2 AN INTERPRETATION OF QUALITY OF LIFE

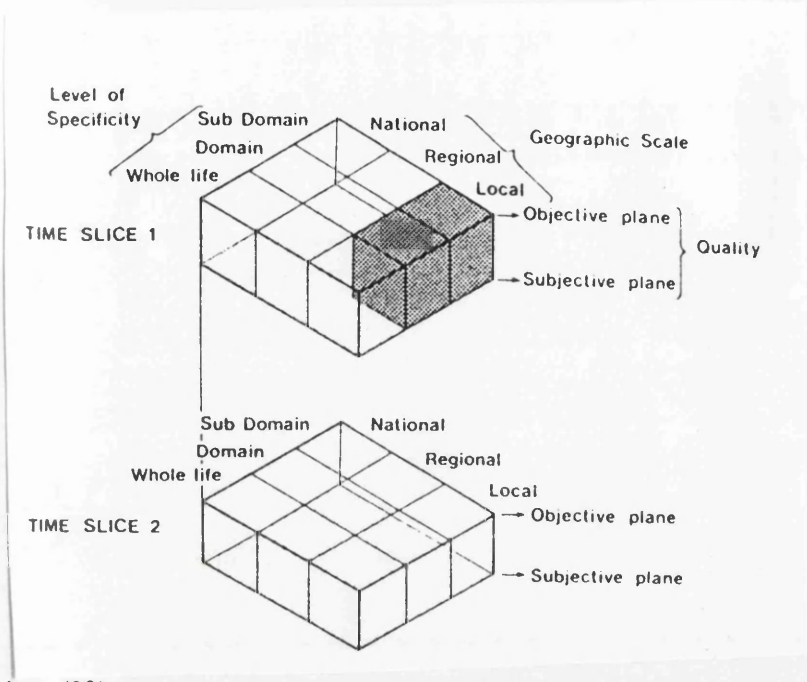
Here, more detailed attention is paid to the nature of QoL. Three aspects are discussed, i.e. the subject of study, component parts of QoL and the fusion of internal & external assessments.

4.1.2a Subject of Study

Who should be the subject of QoL research? There are three possibilities, i.e. society (an abstract conception of QoL), an individual (a tangible conception of QoL - where it is readily apparent what is being studied) or the subject group-in-society (tangible). In Figure 4.1b it is proposed that QoL is tangible - regardless of the difficulties faced in specifying and measuring QoL, it fulfils a specific role in a system of understanding (Figure 4.1b).

Figure 4.2

Pacione's (82) Conceptual Framework For Geographical Quality Of Life Research



Source: Pacione (82)

Confusion arises when empirical application suggests that QoL is abstract, e.g. Campbell et al (76) introduced QoL as a "*vague and ethereal entity*" before undertaking a social indicators based survey of the Quality of American Life, i.e. their project was a systematic examination of a vague concept! A clear statement of the tangible purpose of study is an important first step in QoL research. Thus, 'society' can be rejected as the subject of study. Castells (83) understood QoL in this abstract sense, explaining that falling QoL is indicative of a social crisis and that new spatial orders would improve this condition. Thus, with society as the subject of study, QoL is a vague notion of societal stability/progress. At the other extreme, there can be no QoL of an individual in isolation from society as QoL research should involve an internal *and an external* (comparative) component. The individual must be considered within the context of which s/he is part. Thus, the only basis for a QoL study is the subject in society. Clearly, rejecting the two extremes (society and individual) still leaves considerable latitude for subject specification in QoL research. Indeed, subject specification has more philosophical, rather than practical, relevance; most studies that are identified as QoL research do not focus exclusively upon the individual or society i.e. virtually all discuss the QoL of a particular group in society. Nevertheless, this precise specification of the subject is progress worth making; it emphasises the tangibility of QoL and leaves the reader with a clearer indication of the goals of QoL research.

While QoL research is not based upon the individual, a concern with individuals is of central importance. First, individual's opinions are the basis for the 'subjective' dimension of the internal component of QoL, i.e. individual opinions are aggregated to form a subject group self-assessment (in the thesis, 275 individual lone parents' evaluations of their family life are aggregated to a parent assessment). However, the totality of life concerns of the individual cannot be captured by a single

QoL research tool; as was argued in an earlier paper (McKendrick 93), all individuals have their own particular conception of what constitutes the ideal QoL. Such is the diversity of human life, that not even social research, with its capacity to synthesise and reduce complex reality, could produce a set of indicators to measure both internal QoL and external QoL for all individuals within a socio-spatial population group.

This raises two issues. First, to what extent can a QoL research tool address the life concerns of individuals within a social group, i.e. how much isn't considered by the QoL research tool?. This is worthy of further investigation, but lies beyond the possibilities of the thesis. Second, it can be argued that measuring life quality is valid and useful, but at a more specific level; the ultimate goal is not to measure QoL, but rather to measure the quality of sub-population life. this is the position adopted in the thesis and it is not compromised by the possibility that other significant life concerns of individual lone parents will be overlooked. Thus, the thesis does not aim to measure the QoL of lone parents; rather, it is measuring the quality of lone parent life, i.e. those life concerns pertaining to lone parenthood and shared by the majority of lone parents. Figure 4.3 demonstrates this point; in measuring the (internal) quality of life of lone parents (the sacks), the research tool fails to capture all of the concerns of each lone parent (the shaded areas). These 'hidden' concerns will vary according to the individual (both in terms of the number of concerns omitted and the degree to which they influence that individual's overall QoL). The cumulative effect of these unmeasured dimensions in a survey of lone parent's QoL may be to tip the scales towards superficiality. However, the research remains useful for its analysis of the common features of importance to lone parents. This is a realistic assessment of the utility of QoL, i.e. QoL is wide-ranging, but not all-encompassing; to suggest otherwise, to overestimate the capability of QoL research, is to risk discrediting the enterprise.

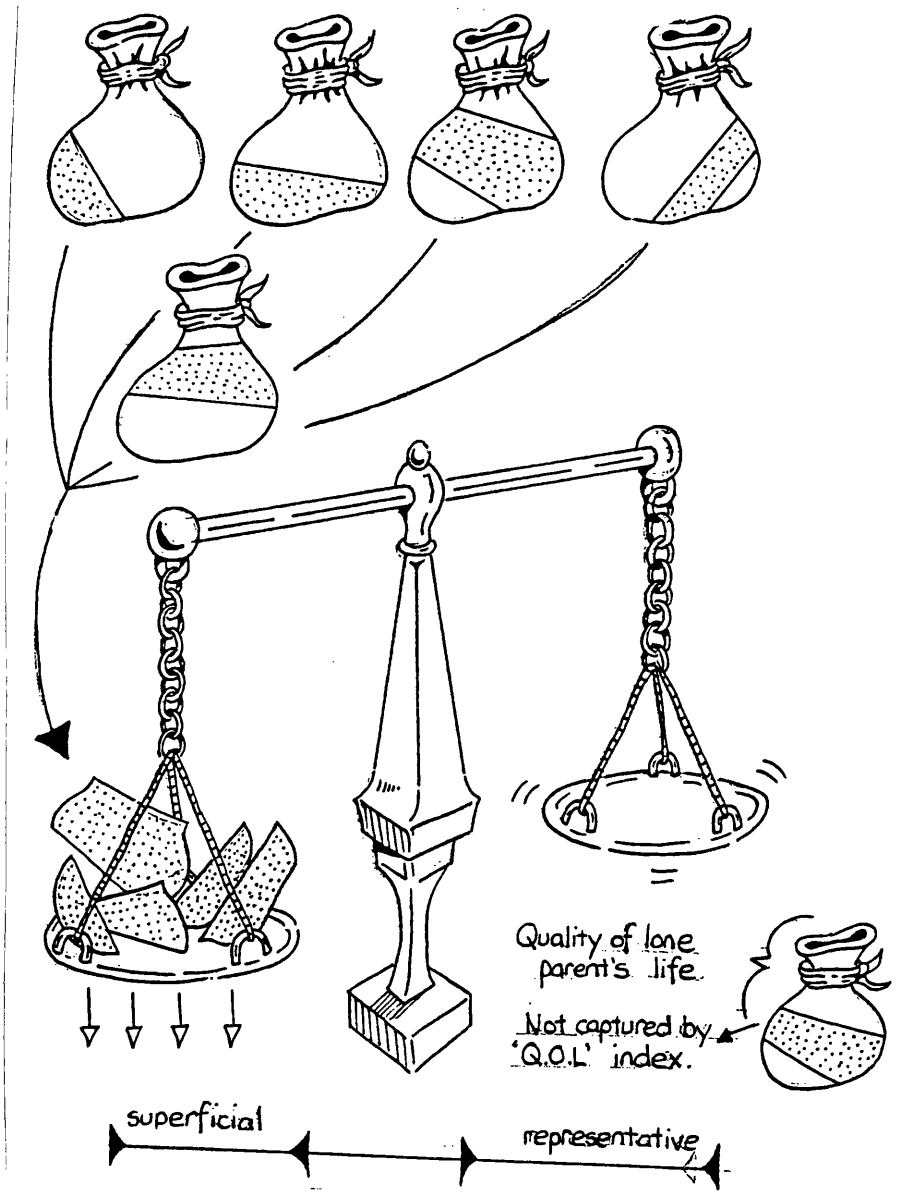
One final point should be raised, i.e. as has been established in conception of space debates (Thrift 83; Castells 83), it is erroneous to conceive of social and the spatial separately. For QoL, the socio-spatial milieu - the subject of analysis - can take three forms (space, place or a subject group). The distinction between space and place is an important one for geography. As Short (89, p.85) explains, there is an important difference between these spatial constructs:

> *" Space is abstracted, place is particular, one is a mental construct, the other a social construct, both an environmental context which reflect, influence and record social life. "*

For example, QoL research can focus on the inner-city (a space) or Moss Side (a place). A second point to note is that the external QoL assessment differs between research with a geographical root (space & place) and those with a social root; the former measures conditions of the environment for (and by) a population group, whereas, the latter measures conditions of the population within the environment. Of course, the internal dimension always refers to the assessments of people. The key point is that places & spaces *per se* are not being 'personified' and assessed; rather, peoples' opinion/experiences must also be incorporated to fulfil the requirements of an internal and an external component.

Figure 4.3

Quality of Sub-Population Life



Source: McKendrick (93)

In summary, QoL research is the evaluation of the extent to which the needs of a subject-in-society are being fulfilled. The subject-in-society may be defined according to geography or according to social character, but it is always the case that the experience of people must be incorporated into the analysis. Finally, QoL research does not aim to conduct an all-inclusive analysis of the QoL of each individual member of a population group; it is quite sufficient for research to focus on their shared concerns - this must be recognised as the basis of the research.

4.1.2b Component Parts Of Quality Of Life

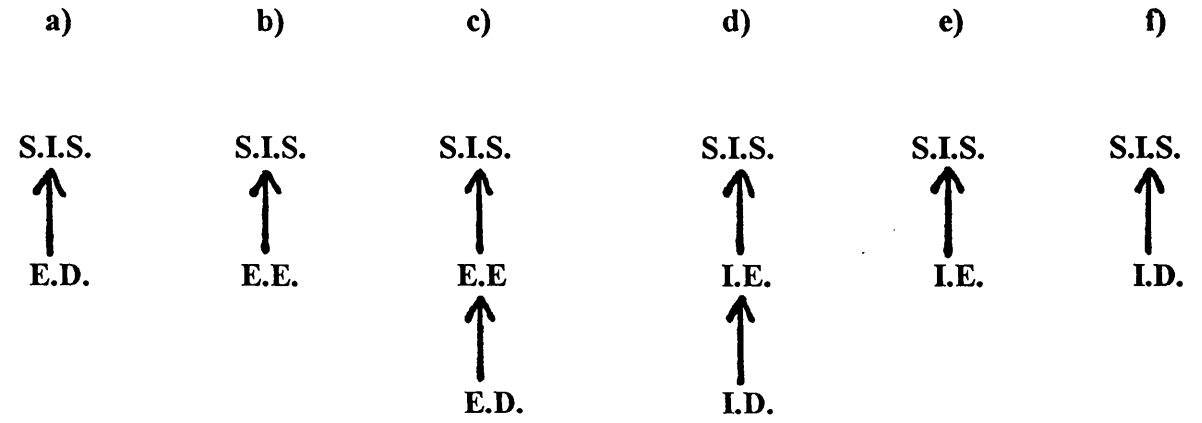
Thus, QoL is the consideration of the socio-spatial subject in society. Figure 4.1b demonstrated that QoL consists of an external and internal component. However, what is not apparent from this

diagram is that both components involve definition and/or evaluation, i.e. an assessment on how *important* particular life concerns are and an assessment of how *satisfied* the subject is with her/his experience of these life concerns. In general, the utility of definition is generally undervalued in QoL research.

Figure 4.4 outlines the six individual component parts that can constitute a QoL study. Thus, there are four simple structures, in which either definition or evaluation is considered, for either the internal or external component, and there are two complex structures, in which definition weights evaluation, for either the internal or external component. A QoL study must encompass an internal component and an external component. This is not to say that a research project considering only one of these components cannot make a useful contribution to knowledge; rather, it merely makes a more limited contribution and should not be understood as an example of QoL research. However, it is enough to consider either definition or evaluation for each component. Naturally, the most comprehensive study of QoL will be the one in which definition weights evaluation for both components. It should be recognised that the manner of weighting, i.e. according greater significance to those variables identified as the most important, differs for internal and external components. Unlike external QoL, the weightings for internal QoL are those of the subject and can be applied on an individual basis (applying an individual's weightings to her/his evaluations and aggregating these results for the socio-spatial subject group) or on a group basis (calculating a subject group weighting and applying this to individual's evaluations). In the thesis, only the 'subjective' aspect of the internal component of QoL is weighted; the individual basis of weightings was employed. This was necessary to reach a deeper understanding of lone parents' interpretation of their own situation.

Figure 4.4

Core Components Of A Quality Of Life Study



Abbreviations: S.I.S. - Subject-in-society E.D. - External Definition E.E. - External Evaluation
I.E. - Internal Evaluation I.D. - Internal Definition

4.1.2c Fusion Of Internal And External

The synthesis of the internal and the external components can take place at two stages; first, the results of the two separate studies can be compared and a QoL conclusion reached thereafter. The alternative is to incorporate the internal into the external. This has some intuitive appeal; the (objective) measurement of life quality being weighted according to the opinions of the subject of analysis. However, this model is best understood as a compromise ; by merging these prior to data analysis, the rationale for each component is undermined, i.e. there is no internal perspective nor external perspective as such. In the thesis, the internal and external are appraised (separately), then synthesised in chapter six.

4.1.3 PHILOSOPHICAL POSITIONS AND QUALITY OF LIFE

As human geography moves further towards philosophical means of expression and discourse (Thrift 91), so the engagement of QoL with such debate becomes more pertinent; indeed, it is an indictment on the practitioners of geographical QoL that no substantial philosophical discussion has taken place after more than two decades of research. Consequently, QoL with its quantitative emphasis is perceived by the research community as positivistic practice. Herein lies another philosophical problem: since the late 1960's/early 1970's social science has shifted to post-positivistic practice. Geographical QoL research, as currently practised, is considered to belong to a by-gone era. Here, the philosophical interpretation of QoL adopted in the thesis is discussed.

4.1.3a Ontology & Quality Of Life

Bhaskar (78) distinguishes three ontological traditions, each of which seeks to provide the answer to the fundamental and foundational scientific question of 'what is the world like in order that knowledge is possible?':

1) *Empiricism:* Where the ultimate objects of knowledge are 'events'.
2) *Idealism*: Where the ultimate objects of knowledge are constructs (models and idealisations).
3) *Realism*: Where the ultimate objects of knowledge are the structures and mechanisms that generate phenomena.

Pickles (85) describes a fourth ontological position within human geography:

4) *Regional Ontologies*: Particular knowledges are made possible in 'regions'. Empirical study must follow unconstrained descriptive phenomenology that will outline the domain of the phenomena being researched.

Each of the four positions could be adopted (or presupposed) by QoL researchers. For example, a study of the QoL in Britain could:

1) Specify the variations in QoL experienced by residents in different places (Empiricist ontology).
2) Construct a simplified representation of the key determinants of QoL in Britain (Idealist ontology).
3) Examine the underlying forces that account for the QoL in Britain (Realist ontology)
4) Be grounded in an examination of whether a QoL in Britain can actually exist (Regional ontology).

Despite the potential for a wide range of QoL studies, it *appears* to many that most projects are conducted in the empiricist mode. This is partly attributable to the following factors:

1) *Public Interest*: The 'league table' fascinations of the general public with the relative performance of their home area, focuses most attention on the outcomes ('atomistic events') of geographical QoL research.
2) *Workload of QoL Projects*: QoL projects can be monumental data collection/analysis exercises. The researcher may feel justified to reap the benefit of this effort by producing reports that focus on the outcomes (with their Empiricist focus) before developing analytical work.
3) *QoL Project*: The wider QoL movement has dedicated much effort to methodological innovation. Thus, philosophical and theoretical effort has focused on the *validity* of the outcomes rather than more fundamental concerns over the very nature of QoL..

What then of the thesis? It aims to be realist within a subject ontology. That is, while it specifies the QoL of lone parents (chpt. 6), it does so within a broader project that aims to account for the processes that generate this outcome, i.e. a realist project in which the empirical element is a means, to an end and not an ends in itself. The structures and mechanisms that produce the QoL outcome are *represented* by the differences among lone parents (chpt. 8 & 9). From an analysis of these differences, the nature of these underlying forces becomes clearer. Additionally, Pickles' concern that research should initially consider the validity of the subject of analysis is also considered important. Thus, the thesis must first consider the extent to which it is valid to talk of a lone parent QoL (chpt. 7).

Self-evidently, the thesis can be positioned within the traditional systems of knowledge. However, the post-modern challenge to the traditional systems of knowledge must also be considered. What would a post-modern QoL involve? QoL research could be perceived as the antithesis of all that postmodernism represents. Under postmodernism, each individual would hold a unique definition of QoL and would experience life concerns in a unique manner. Furthermore, the oft-stated aim of using QoL as a policy-tool, i.e. to specify inequalities, rankles with postmodernists' concern to celebrate difference. However, the critical difference between the conceptual framework proposed in 4.1.2 and postmodernism is not that postmodernism demands an individualistic basis of QoL, for as was explained in 4.1.2a, the individual's perspective is incorporated within the thesis. Rather, the key difference concerns the importance accorded to the residual components, i.e. those dimensions that contribute toward an individual's QoL but are not considered by the research tool as they are not

shared by members of a subject group (the shaded area of Figure 4.3). Post-modernists would insist that the omission invalidates the contribution QoL can make to knowledge. Supporters of QoL research would argue that useful contributions to knowledge are made at the *subject-group* level, not the individual level.

However, the formulation of QoL in the thesis is less distanced from post-modernism than this suggests. That is, it takes a post-modernist step by recognising that it is necessary to conceive of the individual as a number of selves, Figure 4.1b demonstrates this point, i.e. a QoL research tool must be devised to suit the particular subject group under study. The goals of the thesis involve modern and post-modern concerns; modern in the sense that knowledge can be advanced and progress can be made through the application of QoL, but post-modern in the sense that a recognition of the differences of, and within, the subject group are integral to the analysis. In conclusion, it is believed that lone parents may be a social grouping which share a QoL. However, to elicit the character of this QoL (in order to facilitate explanation), requires an appropriate analytical basis.

4.1.3b Epistemology & Quality Of Life

It is readily apparent from sections 4.1.1 & 4.1.2 that QoL can be conceived of in various ways. Thus, there are a range of QoL interpretations to which philosophical scrutiny could be applied. Similarly, scholars from each school of philosophy can adopt a wide range of positions. To overcome the obvious difficulties in philosophising QoL, a similar approach to that of Jackson & Smith (84):

> *"... We believe that the various perspectives exploited by social geographers can be illustrated with recourse to the philosophical triad (of positivism, humanism and structuralism ... most of the literature can be assigned a position relative to these extremes."*
>
> Jackson & Smith (84, p.4.)

Ideal types (positivism, structuralism, humanism) are used to convey the essential differences between different philosophical positions. As with Jackson & Smith, it is recognised that this is a simplification. In the present context, the key features of the philosophical positions are not described (a la Jackson & Smith); rather, critiques are offered for the model of QoL developed in section 4.1.2.

Eyles and Lee (82) have warned one of the most serious epistemological errors, i.e. the inappropriate conflation of analytical positions (positivism, humanism & structuralism) by geographers:

> *" There appears to be an assumption ... that these 'approaches' are in some way alternatives; that we can select this concept from one approach, that method from yet another. Unfortunately, this desire for eclecticism rests on the false assumption that these approaches are above all techniques for analysis rather than epistemologies. In other words there is a failure to realise that the three 'approaches' are in fact different philosophical systems, all demanding different modes of evaluation. "*

Nevertheless, a multiplicity of epistemological positions are adopted by human geographers. For example, *within* humanistic geography, there is existentialism (Relph 81), idealism (Guelke 74), phenomenology (Pickles 85), pragmatism (Jackson & Smith 84, p.71-9) and Marxian humanism (Cosgrove 84). As their quote (above) demonstrated, Jackson & Smith (84) provide a resolution of the contradiction between Eyles & Lee's argument, i.e. that philosophical positions should not be conflated, and the observation that a wide range of epistemological positions have been adopted within human geography. That is, they argue that these 'hybrid' epistemologies are legitimate, providing, of course, they are recognised as epistemologies and that consistent, coherent argument can substantiate their application. Furthermore, locating each epistemology a position relative to three ideal types is a useful tool to discuss epistemological differences. Thus, a consideration of how QoL knowledge is solicited (which complements the ontological issue raised in 4.1.3a of what QoL knowledge is possible) can be constructively undertaken by referring to just three epistemological positions. The central tensions between each 'vertex' is discussed in relation to QoL research.

TENSION WITHIN THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL TRIAD: The central tensions are between :

1) The assumed objectivity of positivism and the inherent subjectivity of humanism.
2) The active view of the human agent of humanism and the passive view accorded by structuralism.
3) Positivists interest in externally observable social facts and structuralists belief in the subordination of such facts to underlying explanatory structure.

The positioning of QoL (thesis interpretation) with respect to each tension is now considered. QoL research tends to adopt the objective approach of the positivist by assuming that the QoL of the subject can be ascertained by objective rational enquiry. This is also the case for QoL research that canvasses the subject's interpretation of his/her situation, i.e. these are tangible and open to scrutiny, measurement, verification, and use as a basis of generalisation. However, these QoL opinions must first be negotiated at the level of the individual.

The research framework permits an active role for the human agent, in that his/her internal QoL is negotiated at an individual level, i.e. each lone parent's personal definition of QoL is used to weight their own evaluations of QoL. However, the framework also supports a passive view of the agent, i.e. the external dimension of QoL is measured independently of the subject. The resolution of inconsistencies between the internal and external assessments is the ultimate research goal. Thus, the framework is neither humanist nor structuralist in terms of how the human agent is positioned; both are accorded a particular function and the examination of the imbalance between them is the object of analysis.

It has been noted how most QoL research strives for externally observable social facts and is therefore positivistic by nature. Presently, the motivation is more structuralist, i.e. to appreciate the structures and mechanisms that *produce* the lone parent QoL. Nevertheless, initially, lone parent QoL is measured. However, it is important to stress that this initial stage is not conducted in positivistic mode; there is no acceptance of these opinions at face value. Rather, as was explained

above, QoL is the negotiation of the internal perspective and the external one. Only when this stage has been completed can an examination of underlying forces commence.

Thus described, the philosophical underpinning of the research framework of the thesis is subject to the same criticisms levelled at Johnston (80), Hay (79) and others by Eyles & Lee (82); it claims to be positivist with humanistic concessions (in terms of objectivity/subjectivity); it accepts the humanist and structuralist interpretations of the human agent and it strives to appreciate the structural forces that produce a lone parent QoL, yet due to the analytical workloads (4.1.3a) is prone to becoming stuck at the positivist's level! However, as Jackson & Smith advocated, such an eclectic strategy can be employed, provided that:

"... their subject matter and analytical techniques are logically and consistently articulated. "

Jackson & Smith (84, p.4)

This section has been devoted to the scrutiny of the core concept of the thesis. It is argued that the interpretation of QoL that will be applied in the following chapters is coherent. That is, the conceptual apparatus that is employed in the thesis meets the criteria Jackson & Smith determine is necessary to permit eclecticism. The remainder of the chapter now argues that the analytical techniques employed to unravel the complexity of lone parent QoL are as consistent as the concept itself.

4.2 PRODUCING THE EMPIRICAL : A MULTI-STAGE & MULTI-METHOD APPROACH

Two points should be made regarding the nature of the research. First, there are several stages; second, within each stage, a multiplicity of methods were utilised. The multi-stage and multi-method nature of the research is now discussed.

4.2.1 MULTI-STAGE RESEARCH

Figure 4.5 demonstrates that there are four stages in the thesis and that three separate forces shaped the research path of the thesis, i.e. literature review, the area of study and earlier empirical application. Some general comments should be made;

1) A number of factors can (and did) combine to influence each research application. Most notable in this respect is the piloting of the 'LPQoL Questionnaire', which was indirectly influenced by the exploratory QoL interview (literature via earlier empirical application) and directly influenced by a review of the social indicators research literature (literature); the experience of the exploratory QoL interview (earlier empirical application); knowledge of the geographical context (area of study) & knowledge of lone parent support groups (in area of study).
2) Each stages is multi-method, i.e. more than one method is used to achieve the goals of each stage. For example, in the exploratory phase of the research, time-space diaries and a QoL questionnaire were used to acquire an understanding of lone parent life. The multi-method nature of research will become more readily apparent as the particulars of each stage are discussed.
3) Despite the multi-method approach, a core concern runs throughout the duration of the research, i.e. the specification and exploration of lone parents' life concerns (boxed research applications).

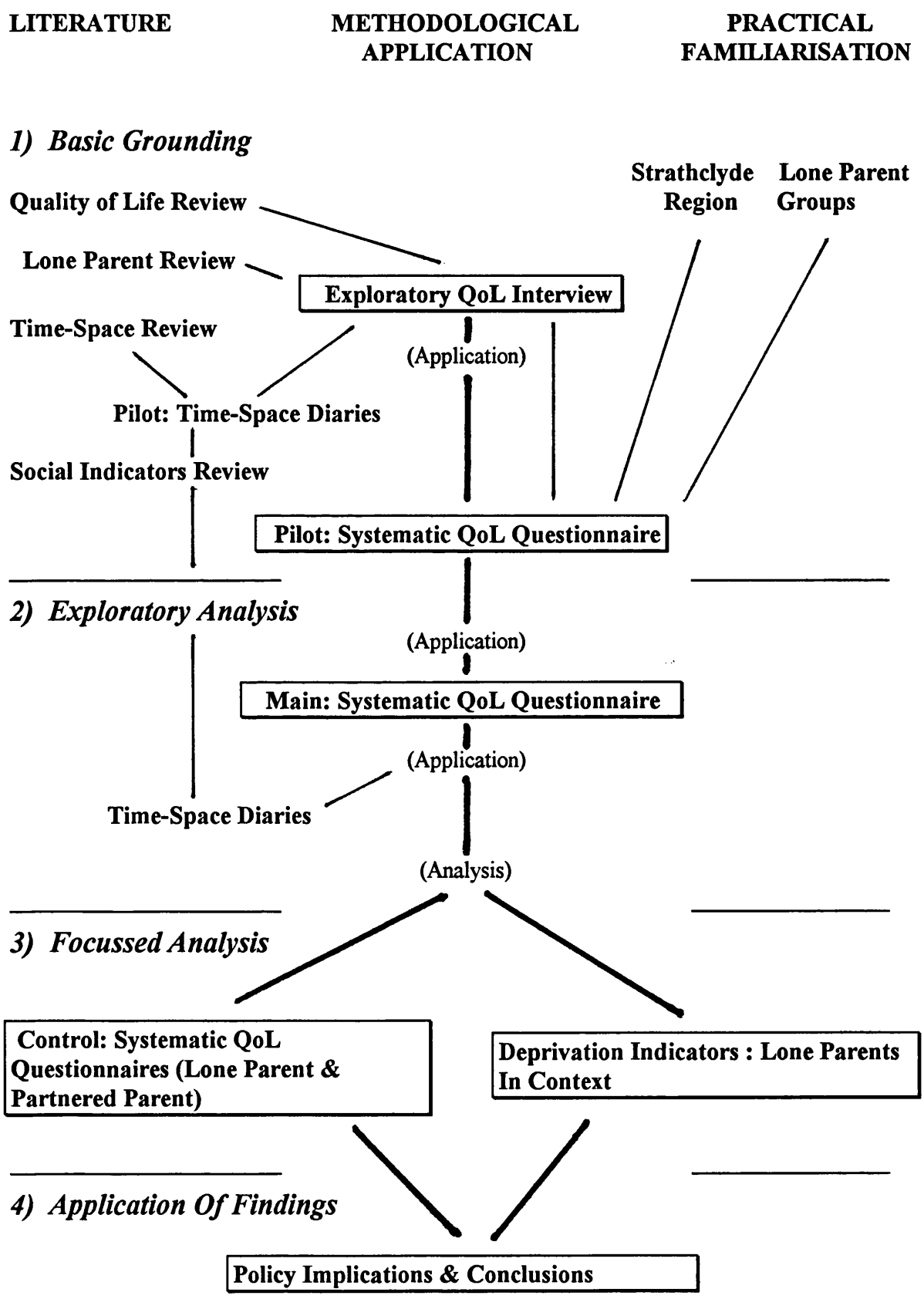
4.2.1a Stage One : Basic Grounding

In this initial stage of the research, the aim was to acquire sufficient background knowledge of lone parents and QoL to enable the formulation of specific research questions. As Figure 4.5 shows, exploratory interviews, literature reviews and 'practical' awareness all contributed to this end.

At the outset, a clinical interview was an appropriate tool to use (4.3.1); broad themes were introduced to the interviewees (Appendix 1), e.g. what are the good points about your life?, who were then accorded control to direct the proceedings into the areas they considered most significant. The interviews were useful in other respects:

Figure 4.5

Research Path Of The Thesis: A Multi-Stage Analysis



1) *Diary Participants*: Several interviewees volunteered to complete a self-administered time-space diary. These diaries also contributed to an understanding of lone parent life. Participants provided general information on their average week and more detailed information about one particular day in their life.
2) Input To *Pilot Version of The Systematic QoL Questionnaire*: The key concerns of lone parents, identified through the interviews, were translated into questions for the piloting of the systematic QoL questionnaire.

4.2.1b Stage Two : Exploratory Analysis

The 'basic grounding' highlighted the research themes of most importance. In the exploratory phase these were systematically analysed. Initially, the pilot survey results were reviewed. This led to several improvements to the main LPQoL Questionnaire. As for the Exploratory QoL interview, the LPQoL questionnaire was used to generate a sample of lone parents who were willing to complete a time-space diary. The data from the LPQoL questionnaire provided answers to many of the key research questions that were posed in the basic grounding phase. However, the very application of this questionnaire, in turn, raised further research questions.

4.2.1c Stage Three : Focused Analysis

The focused phase had two functions:

1) To undertake an in-depth analysis of specific issues that featured prominently in the exploratory phase. To facilitate this, a further two questionnaire surveys were administered. First, a QoL study was undertaken for two parent families. This was used to compare two parent and lone parent families. Second, a smaller control sample survey was undertaken to test the representativeness of the original lone parent survey population. This presented an opportunity to examine some of the themes from the original survey in greater depth.
2) To examine other important issues that were not considered beforehand. That is, the QoL opinions of lone parents (internal QoL) was assessed in light of the extent of deprivation known to exist among the lone parent population (measured through official Government statistics). As well as focusing on lone parents as a whole, comparative analyses were also undertaken, i.e. lone parents and other households groups & lone parents from different geographical areas.

In summary, this stage provided data that complemented the findings of the exploratory phase and examined the context within which the needs assessments data should be analysed.

4.1.2d Stage Four : Application Of Data

In the final stage, the aim was to synthesise all of the insights gained in the research and to consider policy implications. The multi-stage nature of the thesis has been explained. In so doing, attention has been drawn to its multi-method character. Presently, the significance of a multi-method framework is discussed.

4.2.2 MULTI-METHOD RESEARCH

A concern to adopt a multi-method research strategy was in place before specific research questions were formulated. Opinions such as those of Wax (71) highlight its appeal:

> *" Strict and rigid adherence to any method , technique or doctrinaire position may, for the fieldwork, become like confinement in a cage. If he is lucky or very cautious, a fieldwork may formulate a research problem so that he will find all the answers he needs within his cage. But if he finds himself in a field situation where he is limited by a particular method, theory or technique, he will do well to slip through the bars and try to find out what is going on."*
>
> Wax (1971, p.10) cited in Burgess, R. (1984, p.143)

Brewer & Hunter (88), outline four bases from which a multi-method strategy can develop (degree of planning, data sources, sampling strategy and team-based research) and describe seven features, i.e. differences vis-à-vis uni-method research, combining strategies, costs, independence, insulation for independence, interdependence, integration of results and comparison between methods. All of these features, except for team-based research, are evident within the multi-method strategies that were employed in the project.

4.2.2a In What Sense Multi-Method?

One of the fundamental distinctions between multi-method strategies is whether they are consciously (and continuously) flexible or whether they are pre-defined. In the thesis, the 'basic-grounding' stage was flexible, whereas the 'exploratory' stage was planned beforehand. This reflected changing research goals, i.e. the shift from an interview-based analysis (definition of problem) to a questionnaire-based analysis (measurement of problem). Thus, in the thesis, the degree of flexible planning is a function of the stage of the project and the experience of the researcher.

Each multi-method application sought to overcome biases/shortcomings that are inherent within each particular method. Thus, the diaries provided insights into lone parent living (behaviour, daily routine) that could not be attained by the systematic QoL questionnaire.

Multiple sampling strategies were utilised for the diaries and for the questionnaire. Table 4.1 outlines the nature of the sampling strategy used for each application within the thesis. Multiple sampling strategies were adopted within and across stages. When multiple sampling approaches were used *within* a stage, the aim was to ensure that an adequate number of a specific type of lone parent responded. For example, distribution via self-collection points targeted those lone parents who were not support group members; this complemented the distribution of questionnaires via the lone parent support group network. When multiple sampling approaches were used *across* stages, the aim was to examine the validity of sampling frames, e.g. the control survey of the systematic LPQoL questionnaire sought to test the validity of the earlier versions (pilot and main).

4.2.2b Adopting A Multi-Method Approach

Utilising a multi-method approach overcomes the limitations associated with individual techniques. Most importantly, multiple strategies are more advantageous than combining strategies, e.g. using a diary *and* a questionnaire *instead of* a diary questionnaire. Combined strategies compromise the very strengths of the basic techniques themselves. Furthermore, unlike the multi-method approach, there is no opportunity for triangulated measurement of the phenomenon under investigation.

Two additional aspects of multi-method research should be discussed. First, it has been suggested (Brewer & Hunter 88) that the researcher should ensure that independence is maintained between applications. It is contended that maintaining independence avoids situations where prior involvement of a subject or, indeed, of the researcher, may influence (bias) later results. In contrast, it is argued that, within the thesis, continued involvement of the subject and of researcher is a source of strength. From the subject, the inter-relationship of daily living patterns, QoL and profile information can be established; for the researcher, experience gained from the earlier stages improves the quality of later work. Brewer & Hunter recognise the value of the former, i.e. interdependence, especially for exploratory research, in order to fully investigate the subject. However, in so doing, they argue both for and against interdependence. In contrast a definitive pro-interdependence stance is adopted in the thesis.

Finally, multi method research requires that the results are integrated and that efforts are made to compare/contrast between the methods used. As Figure 4.5 demonstrates, the integration of results is a prominent feature of the research project. A comparison of the components of the multi-method strategy is now undertaken, as each particular data collection technique is introduced.

Table 4.1
Sampling Strategies Used In The Thesis

OBJECTIVES OF SAMPLING FRAME SURVEY VERSION	MEANS OF SAMPLING	SAMPLING CRITERIA	INFORMATION SOURCE
A [B]	C	D	E
a) COMPARE LONE PARENT SUPPORT GROUP MEMBERS WITH NON-MEMBERS			
Pilot/Main	Split Sampling Frame	- Support Group Membership Lists	One-Plus/Gingerbread
		- Public Places Used By Lone Parents	see 'd' below
b) FACILITATE LOCATIONAL & SPATIAL CONTEXT COMPARISIONS			
Pilot/Main	Select Sufficient Locations Of Each Type To Facilitate Comparison	- Location Characteristics	
		* % Lone Parents In Area	S.R.C. V.P.S. (91)
		* Settlement Type	Pacione (85)
		* Areal Well-Being	Pacione (85, 86)
c) REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF LOCATIONS IN STRATHCLYDE REGION			
Control	Select Locations To Ensure That The Locational Profile matches That Typically Experienced By Lone Parents	- Location Characteristics (as 'b' above)	
d) REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF LONE PARENTS FROM LOCAL SAMPLE AREAS			
Pilot/Main	Range of Public Places That Would Be Used By Different Lone Parents	- Assumed Clientele (see Table 5.6)	Thomson's Local / Yellow Pages
		* Doctor's Surgery	
		* Community Centre	
		* Library	
Control	Random Household Sample	- Total Population	Electoral Register

4.3 SUPPLEMENTARY DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

The contribution of each research application to the thesis has been outlined. Now, these research methods are described and discussed. In this section, the supplementary data collection techniques are considered, i.e. interviews (4.3.1) and documentary applications (4.3.2).

4.3.1 INTERVIEWS

Interviews involve a personal interaction between the researcher and the researched. This interaction can take various forms (Adams & Schvandveldt 85), However, they all share common advantages over 'non-interactive' applications:

1) The interviewer can clarify the questions of which the interviewee is unsure.
2) A rapport between the interviewee and the interviewer can be established which, in turn, tends to encourage the interviewee's co-operation and motivation.
3) 'Non-verbal' actions, e.g. mood & body action, can be interpreted to provide additional information and/or to aid the understanding of verbal responses.
4) Emotional and sensitive issues can be introduced in a more subtle manner.

Of course, capitalising upon these depends on the interview situation (interviewee and the type of interview) and on the ability of the researcher to ensure that the interviews are as effective as possible. Advice on how interviews should be conducted was sought beforehand (Burgess 84; Adams & Schvandveldt 85). Advice was followed regarding the wording of the questions, interview structure, interviewer conduct, control over the proceedings, how to stimulate 'better' responses, the recording of the interview and post interview behaviour. This advice was put into practice during the basic grounding phase when both informal and formal interviews were conducted.

4.3.1a Informal Discussions

Contact with lone-parent support groups in the early stages of the thesis presented many opportunities for informal talks with lone parents, support group workers and the officials of the organisations. Discussions took place in various settings, e.g. individual support group's weekly meeting place, the office of the Directors of both One Plus & Gingerbread, at drama performances by the 'Lone Rangers' (a lone parent drama group), Gingerbread's National 'Fun-day' for one parent families, A.G.M. of the lone parent organisations and travelling to these functions. The variety of contexts provided opportunities to discuss a range of themes and to discuss each theme in different ways. The contribution of these 'informal interviews' to the thesis is difficult to specify. However,

undoubtedly, it led to a greater understanding of lone parenthood, which, in turn, resulted in more effective research. Furthermore, it instilled confidence in the research project among the lone parent organisations, thereby heightening their levels of interest and involvement.

4.3.1b Formal QoL Interviews

The QoL interviews could be described as 'clinical' interviews (Adams & Schvandveldt 85), i.e. flexible and moderately unstructured. The themes of the interview were introduced to the respondent who controlled the direction & intensity of the discussion thereafter. Utilising this type of interview in QoL research is supported by Mukherjee (89):

> *" ... predetermined data items do not give the interviewer scope for an unconstrained exploration of the information space ... once directed to evaluate ... the perception of QoL is obscured ... reflecting the mechanics of the mind ... (QoL) will not be revealed from staccato responses to a streamlined battery of pre-structured and pre-coded questions. "*
>
> Mukherjee (89, p.112)

Mukherjee (89) proposed an interview schedule which did not predetermine the QoL components and, in his opinion, was structured to cover all relevant themes. This schedule was modified to the requirements of the thesis. In the thesis, the interview schedule consisted of four stages (Appendix 1). First, the interviewee's mind was focused on QoL. Next, the interviewee was asked to consider his or her QoL at different times of their life. From here, the interviewee was asked to evaluate specific domains of their life. Finally, attention was turned to their life goals.

Prospective interviewees were contacted through lone parent support groups (affiliated to One-Plus & Gingerbread [Scotland]). A concern to interview lone parents from different locations governed the selection process. One dozen lone parent support groups were invited to participate. These groups were based in affluent areas (Busby) & areas of deprivation (Barlanark) and were from different settlement types, e.g. city (Glasgow) and New Towns (Irvine).

The interviews were very effective in pinpointing the key areas of concern to lone parents, but were less effective as a means to fully explore lone parents' QoL. Unlike Mukherjee, who allowed two-to-three hours per interview, the research setting and the research subject did not permit such a lengthy investigation. The weekly group meeting was an important social event and it would therefore have been unreasonable to ask interviewees to devote all of this meeting to an academic research interview. Indeed, the support group meetings usually lasted for between one and two hours. In turn, this reflects a more telling restriction; lone parents do not have two-to-three hours to spare from their familial/household responsibilities. Thus, a change in research direction was instigated (4.4.1) and the interviews were used to construct a QoL questionnaire.

4.3.2 DOCUMENTARY APPLICATIONS

Documentary applications can fulfil many functions. Within the thesis their utilisation reflected two concerns:

1) To aid the understanding of lone parenthood (4.3.2a, 4.3.2c)
2) To aid the interpretation of literature (4.3.2b)

Unlike interviews and questionnaires, it is difficult to generalise about the de/merits of documentary applications given that there are so many different types. They may use primary or secondary data; may be a public or a private document; may or may not be solicited. Furthermore, they come in various forms, e.g. diaries, letters, official policy statements etc. Naturally, the advantages /disadvantages of each application reflects the combination of characteristics that they possess. Three groups of documentary application were utilised within the thesis.

4.3.2a Diary-Day Book

The diary-day book was piloted during the basic grounding phase and was administered systematically during the exploratory phase of the research. The document was *solicited* and *private*, consisting of *primary* data. Its private nature offered an insight into lone parents' lifeworlds. The pilot survey was concerned to test its effectiveness as a research tool and to measure the take-up of the diary from interviewees; the representativeness of the sampling frame was not a direct concern. In the exploratory phase, the diary-day book was offered as a means of further participation to respondents of the QoL questionnaire. Appendix 2 provides extracts from the diary-day book used in the exploratory phase. The application consists of two parts:

1) *An Average Week*: Data was collected on what the respondent usually did on each day of the week.
2) *Diary-Day:* For one day of the week, respondents were asked to record a detailed summary of what they actually did.

Participants were given detailed instructions and an example of a completed diary entry. To encourage a comprehensive account of their daily lives and to increase consistency, space was provided for five types of information:

1) *Activity*: For the daily diary, this was subdivided into 'primary activity' and 'what else did you do'. This recognises that people often perform several tasks at once. One activity was suffice for the average week section, as this was only concerned with the main activity.
2) *How long* the main activity lasted.
3) *Where* the activity was undertaken
4) *With whom* the activity was undertaken

5) *Comments*: Where the respondents could supplement and/or clarify the information that they provided.

Forty-three diaries were satisfactorily completed. In general, the quality of these was high, i.e. the diaries provided a detailed account of one-day in the respondents' life and an overview of a typical week. There is no specific section of the thesis that is devoted to reporting the key findings from these time-space diaries. This reflects the fact that way of life is not the basis of the thesis (see Figure 4.1b for details). However, the diaries were of considerable use. First, they provided a greater understanding of lone parents' lives. Second, the behavioural data was of use in helping to understand the nature of lone parents' QoL. Finally, the QoL findings could be related to the context of lone parents' daily lifeworlds.

4.3.2b Bibliographic Record Analysis

In the QoL literature review, extensive use was made of bibliographic indexes and records. Two functions were served.

GEOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH INTEREST THROUGH TIME : Changes in geographers' research interest with QoL through time was estimated using the abstracting journal, GeoAbstracts. In GeoAbstracts each article is catalogued according to its key words. Thus, the volume of geographical QoL research can be estimated by counting the number of articles citing 'quality of life' as a keyword. However, the use of an abstracting journal to measure the output level of a *topic specialism* has its limitations; Table 4.2 outlines the nature of these limitations and problems, along with the steps taken to overcome them in the thesis. Having taken precautionary measures, it is contended that the use of GeoAbstracts to estimate research interest is valid within the thesis.

CITATION ANALYSIS: Citation analysis was used to identify seminal papers in QoL research and to compare research quality across disciplines (3.2.2). Details of all citations from articles published within *Social Indicators Research : An International and Interdisciplinary Journal of QoL Research* from 1990 to 1992 were indexed. This is appropriate as Social Indicators Research is the only journal devoted to the study of QoL. Articles receiving the most citations were assumed to have made a more substantial contribution to QoL research. while criticism has been raised at citation analysis (e.g. Lowenthal 92), the technique is useful as a rough measure of research quality (Bodman 91).

4.3.2c Secondary Data Analysis

Three surveys were used to compare the survey sample population with the G.B. lone parent population (5.3.1), Strathclyde lone parent population (5.3.2), Strathclyde two parent population (5.2.2) and the G.B. two parent population (5.2.1). In each case, the data is *secondary*, from the *public* domain and is *not solicited*. The drawback of using such resources is that the data is often

Table 4.2
Estimating Quality Of Life Research Output Using Abstracting Journals : Problems and Prospects

PROBLEM : TYPE OF PROBLEM EXPLANATION SOLUTION
a) INCOMPLETE COVERAGE : Interpretation[1,2] **EXPLANATION :** Articles published by geographers in non-geographical journals or in geographical journals not reviewed by GeoAbstracts are generally excluded. **SOLUTION :** Recognise that the count is an estimate and not a precise measure of geographical QoL research.
b) RESTRICTED GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE : Interpretation **EXPLANATION :** Abstracting journals have been criticised for being anglocentric in coverage **SOLUTION :** Recognise that the count is an estimate and may be biased toward English language publications.
c) RESTRICTED TYPE OF PUBLICATIONS COVERED : Interpretation **EXPLANATION :** It is mainly academic journal articles that are reviewed **SOLUTION :** Recognise that the count is only an estimate of academic QoL research.
d) DOUBLE-COUNTING : Comparison[3] **EXPLANATION :** There is an overlap in journal coverage across abstracting journals. **SOLUTION :** Allocate articles to one discipline.
e) SEMANTICS AND DISCIPLINARY TRADITION : Comparison **EXPLANATION :** Different disciplines have preferred terms for QoL concepts, eg. geographers are more likely to cite 'welfare' as a keyword after the welfare era of geography in the 1970s **SOLUTION :** All QoL-related concepts are included in the analysis to avoid disciplinary bias.
f) PLACING RESULTS IN THE WIDER DISCIPLINARY CONTEXT : Comparison **EXPLANATION :** Crude volume of research is not an appropriate measure of disciplinary concern with QoL (the number of practitioners varies by discipline). **SOLUTION :** Numbers are measured against total disciplinary output.

Notes 1 - Interpretation problems refer to the estimate of research output for each abstracting journal (disciplinary area).
2 - For each interpretative problem, it is assumed that cross-disciplinary (across abstracting journals) comparisons are not affected, i.e. the same problems apply to each.
3 - Comparison problems refer to attempts to compare research output across abstracting journals.

imperfect for the purpose to which it is put. The advantages are that the data is readily accessible and that a wider coverage of the population is provided.

1) *G.B. Census Of Population*: Given that it targets all G.B residents, the census is the most appropriate data archive to compare against. It is particularly useful in that geographical comparisons between the survey population and the actual lone parent population can be drawn for areas within Strathclyde Region.
2) *General Household Survey*: A General Household Survey (hereafter, G.H.S.) has been undertaken on an annual basis since 1977. The sample size is considerable (in 1986 it comprised 26,073 individuals) although it is insufficient for small-scale areal disaggregation. A particular strength of the G.H.S. over the G.B census is that provides more detailed information on family relationships within the household.
3) *Bradshaw & Millar (91)*: This D.H.S. commissioned survey of over one thousand low income lone parents provides more detailed lone parent information than the generalist national surveys. Thus, the Strathclyde lone parent population can be measured against the national average for lone parents on dimensions such as 'reasons for separation' and the 'best things about being a lone parent'.

Each resource was used selectively to draw upon its particular strengths. By using multiple sources, a comprehensive comparison of the survey population and the broader lone parent population was possible.

In conclusion, the supplementary data collection techniques were only administered after careful planning and a critical review of their utility. While they are 'supplementary' to the core data collection technique - the QoL questionnaires - each of these subsidiary techniques made a valuable contribution by improving the quality of the survey instrument (e.g. diary) or by helping make sense of the survey results (e.g. secondary data analysis).

4.4 THE QUALITY OF LIFE QUESTIONNAIRES : THE PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

The purpose of this section is to provide a comprehensive report of the Quality Of Life questionnaires (hereafter, generally referred to as the QoL questionnaires or, more specifically, as the LPQoL Questionnaire and 2PQoL Questionnaire for lone parents and partnered parents respectively - Appendix 3 to 6). There are three reasons why the QoL Questionnaires, in particular the LPQoL version, are discussed apart from the previous methodological section:

1) Within the overall research project, the LPQoL Questionnaire has a role of central importance (Figure 4.5). Thus, it must be clearly demonstrated that it is properly constructed and that it performs satisfactorily.
2) The sampling frame and the distribution strategy were unorthodox. It is important that any possible bias associated with this is fully explored.
3) A detailed examination of these research tools is beneficial from a 'personal' viewpoint. Treating doctoral research as a learning process, it is beneficial to scrutinise this *first* attempt at survey analysis.

In general, the QoL questionnaires canvassed details of the respondents:

1) *Background/Demographic Status*, i.e. profile characteristics, enabling the respondent to be positioned in respect to others.
2) *Opinions/Values*, i.e. lone parents' interpretations of their own circumstances.

Interviews have the potential to collect such information (and more besides). However, self-completion questionnaires were used in preference to interviews for the following reasons:

1) The survey population was geographically disparate: Administering a questionnaire was more logistical and reduced the fieldwork expenses relative to interviewing.
2) A large number of respondents were required for comparative purposes: Questionnaires are a more efficient means of appropriating large quantities of information.
3) Systematic comparisons were sought: questionnaires ask the same questions in the same format ensuring that the responses are directly comparable.

4.4.1 THE LONE PARENT QOL QUESTIONNAIRES

The pilot survey was conducted during the months of August and start of September in 1991. The purpose was to identify any major weaknesses and/or omissions within the questionnaire and to test distribution strategies. The main survey was conducted between the months of October 1991 and January 1992. The survey was modified in light of the pilot experience, including comments from

lone parent support group workers & officials and academic researchers who reviewed the pilot questionnaire. The control sample was conducted during the months of October and November 1992. Its main aim was to gauge the representativeness of the main survey population, i.e. whether the sampling frame and distribution strategy of the main survey produced a similar sample population to that generated by more 'conventional' approaches. Furthermore, this presented an opportunity to explore some of the key research themes in greater detail.

What role did the LPQoL questionnaires serve within the overall research project?

1) The questionnaire is part of the process to determine the life concerns of lone parents. This is the core theme of the research.
2) There are three versions of the LPQoL Questionnaire, i.e., pilot (basic grounding phase), main (exploratory phase) and control (focused phase), each of which fulfils a unique function.
3) The LPQoL questionnaire (main version) is the most important part of the second stage of the research project, which aims to understand the QoL of lone parents in Strathclyde Region.
4) Four factors influenced the questionnaire construction:
   i) familiarisation with the lone parent literature (chpt. 2), including policy debates.
   ii) a temporal and spatial analysis of lone parents' living environment (diary day insights into lone parents' lifeworld, 4.3.2a)
   iii) theorisation and conceptualisation of 'Quality of Life', after a review of earlier QoL studies (chpt. 3 and 4.1).
   iv) introduction to the experience of lone parents' lives, through the QoL interviews and informal discussions (4.3.1).

The LPQoL Questionnaires are of the subjective well-being tradition in geographical QoL research. It develops this approach in two ways:

1) It attempts to relate contemporary evaluations to life course changes. This is facilitated by section four of the LPQoL questionnaire (pilot & main), which is devoted to lone parents experiences (Appendix 3 & 4).
2) It integrates geographical research with recent developments in the S.I.R. field. For example, Alexander et al's (90) approach to coping strategies is modified and applied to lone parents in section four.

The content of the LPQoL questionnaires can be reviewed in appendices 3 to 6. Here, six critical aspects of the questionnaires are raised for discussion.

4.4.1a Presentation

RESEARCH PROJECT: The manner in which the questionnaire is presented to prospective candidates can have a critical bearing on whether they participate. As there was no physical contact with the respondent for the pilot and main versions, the objectives of the research project were explained in an accompanying letter (Appendix 7) and on the outside pages of the questionnaire

(Appendix 3 & 4). In the cover letter, it was emphasised that the survey was independent, that no postage costs would be incurred by the respondent and that the survey was confidential. A (generous) closing date for the return of questionnaires was specified and an approximate completion time (20 minutes) was estimated. The covers of the questionnaire had an explanatory role, in addition to its aesthetic value. First, the front cover established that the survey is for lone parents and is conducted by a geographer from Glasgow University and emphasises that respondents may omit questions that they are unwilling (or unable) to answer. This instruction on a front cover may be disconcerting for some respondents, as it appears to indicate that *personal* information is probed. However, it is equally re-assuring to others who may wish to share some, but not all, aspects of their life with a researcher. Furthermore, this re-assurance counters an oversight in the questionnaire where a non-response option was not provided for some questions. The back cover offers respondents the opportunity for further participation and a summary of the research results.

RESEARCH TOOLS: Just as the presentation of the research project is related to overall participation, so the presentation of particular questions (research tools) can have a bearing on responses to issues within the questionnaire. The general appearance of the questionnaire and the presentation of specific questions were carefully planned. The layout is compact, reflecting two concerns:

1) *Production costs*. At the time of printing, it was not clear whether these costs would be borne by my sponsors (E.S.R.C.), my host department, or by myself. Thus, it was important that financial outlay was minimised; this involved economising with stationery costs.
2) *The length of the questionnaire*. To avoid discouraging prospective respondents, it was desirable to make the questionnaire appear as short as possible.

These overriding concerns influenced the presentation strategies used throughout the questionnaire:

1) Marsden's (67) system of labelling for multi-option questions was used. For example, this was used for the 'domain importance' questions (section 2, Appendix 4)
2) Bold typeface was used to highlight the *options* respondents were required to choose from.
3) Upper case was used to stress the *instructions* within the introductory sentences before questions.

Generally, researchers are advised that condensing the questionnaire has a negative impact on the level of response. Through innovative question presentation, the dangers were avoided.

4.4.1b Research Tools

The research tools used in the LPQoL questionnaires are discussed in various parts of chapter four. For example, the previous section (4.4.1a) discussed the presentation of questions within the questionnaire and in 4.5.1a, the nature of the QoL response options is discussed. However, there are several specific points that should be emphasised.

Each question (research tool) within the LPQoL questionnaires was the subject of considerable thought before the pilot stage; testing in the pilot stage and critical evaluation after the main LPQoL

survey. The *response options* were selected on the basis that they would facilitate direct comparison with similar research (e.g. the age-bands were those most typically used in national surveys), or were modifications of response schemes used in other research (e.g. the rating scales for overall QoL - see 10.2). Through reflection and experience the response categories used in the LPQoL questionnaire provided the data to meet the demands of the research.

An important aspect of the QoL research tools is the nature of the responses required. Respondents were asked to discriminate between aspects of their life using *rating scales*. This basis of measurement has been successfully employed by many QoL researchers beforehand (e.g. Rogerson et al 89; Pacione 86) and the utility of this approach is now well established. However, the rating scales used in the thesis, differed from earlier rating scales in several respects. For example, the single measure of QoL, devised by Cantrill (65) was based on eleven intervals, from worst possible life through to best possible life. The research tool used in the thesis different in several respects (see 10.2.1 for details). Similarly, the descriptive labels attached to the numerical values (e.g. 'not at all important' for '1' on the domain importance scale) were devised for the LPQoL questionnaire; it was considered that other labelling schemes did not convey the value range that was required.

Finally, there is the issue of how *representative the indicators* are of the phenomenon they are designed to measure. For example, are 'the physical appearance of housing in your area' and 'the running costs of your home' adequate to capture the reality of lone parents' satisfaction with their housing? Clearly, the indicators will not convey an accurate representation for 100% of lone parents. Thus, the two housing indicators may not adequately incorporate any variation that may arise from the tenancy arrangement; those who share with their parents may experience a better material standard of housing (physical appearance) and incur no housing costs (running costs of home), but may be deeply dissatisfied with their housing conditions (they want independent living). These weaknesses are inherent in any approach that uses indicators. The central issue is whether these indicators can convey the *general situation for the aggregate population*. Two lines of argument can be raised in support of the LPQoL questionnaire. First, the indicators were devised following discussions with lone parents (see Figure 4.5). Thus, the indicators that were selected were considered to be important by lone parents. Second, the control survey used a different approach to measure domain satisfaction, i.e. it asked directly how satisfied lone parents were with each domain (compare Appendix 5 [control] with Appendix 4 [main]). An empirical comparison of the domain satisfaction indices (from the main survey) with the domain satisfaction evaluations (from the control survey) demonstrated that the end result was not significantly altered by the means of measurement used. Thus, it may be concluded that the indicators were able to provide an adequate representation of the experiences of lone parents.

4.4.1c Sampling Frame

SAMPLING CRITERIA: Sampling frames are used to ensure that a representative sample of the research population is surveyed. For the LPQoL questionnaire, it is assumed that a sample drawn

from a combination of areas that are representative of lone parents' typical lived environments in Strathclyde, will generate a representative sample of Strathclyde's lone parent population. Three variables were used to reflect lone parents' lived environment:

1) *The proportion of lone parent households* (of all households with dependent children): Strathclyde Regional Council (hereafter, S.R.C.) provided details of the number and proportion of lone parent households at Enumeration District Level and of the constitution of towns & Electoral Divisions in terms of these Enumeration Districts. The proportion of the total lone parent population who resided in each of six percentage bands (0-9%, 10-14%, 15-19%, 20-24%, 25-29% and 30%+) was then calculated for each prospective survey location and Strathclyde as a whole.
2) *A well-being rating for the locale*: Previous QoL studies within Strathclyde Region have measured the relative well-being of Enumeration Districts within Glasgow (Pacione 86) and of settlements outside Glasgow (Pacione 85). Well-being ratings for Electoral Divisions within Glasgow were calculated by aggregating the number of "most deprived" Enumeration Districts (of Pacione 86) within each Electoral Division. These Electoral Divisions were categorised according to whether they were well above, above, below or well below the Glasgow average. Thereafter, S.R.C. data was used to calculate the proportion of lone parents who reside in areas of very high, high, low and very low well-being.
3) *A classification of settlement type*: Pacione's (86) settlement typology for Strathclyde Region was supplemented to provide a complete coverage of urban areas within the region, i.e. Glasgow *city* and New *Towns* were added to Pacione's classification which consisted of de-industrialising, rural, primary/secondary based, peri-urban and commuter settlements. Furthermore, in addition to Pacione's scheme, settlements with a population of less than one-thousand persons were included. As for well-being, S.R.C. data was used to calculate the proportion of lone parents who reside in each of the seven settlement types.

Thus, the spatial units used for the survey sampling selection process were the 39 Electoral Divisions within Glasgow and all urban settlements outside Glasgow.

SAMPLING BY SURVEY DESIGN: The manner in which this sampling frame was applied varied markedly between the three versions of the LPQoL questionnaire. In the pilot stage, a region-wide coverage was not intended; the self-collection distribution strategy was tested in the urban agglomeration of Ardrossan, Saltcoats & Stevenston in North Ayrshire and distribution via lone parent support groups was applied selectively. Thus, there was no attempt to provide a representative sample of the lone parent population in Strathclyde. The prime concerns of the main survey were to:

1) Facilitate comparative analysis of member/non-members of lone parent groups.
2) Estimate the significance of spatial and locational contexts.

The first point requires that two sampling frames are devised, i.e. one for group members and another for non-group members. Thus, the aim was to achieve a representative sample of group members and a representative sample of non-group members. Clearly, if these two populations

differ and the LPQoL survey samples are representative, then it follows that the LPQoL survey population will not be representative of the overall lone parent population.

Lone parents are unevenly distributed across spaces and places in Strathclyde Region, as elsewhere (Figure 1.3). Thus, to achieve a sufficient number of respondents in those spaces/places in which they are under-represented, e.g. commuter settlements, it is necessary to over-represent their probability of selection in the sampling frame. Thus, the main survey is not representative of the spatial distribution of the lone parent population in Strathclyde Region. It was unclear at the time of *main survey* application if this would compromise the representiveness of the sample.

CONTROL SAMPLE SURVEY: These 'uncertainties' necessitated a further systematic survey from which it would be possible to estimate bias. In this control sample, the aim was to select a combination of locales that would ensure that the sample population mirrored the proportion of lone parents in Strathclyde region across each of the three control variables. This process consisted of three stages.

1) *Preparatory Phase*: To achieve a three-dimensional proportional fit, it was necessary to set a target figure. Following discussion with senior researchers from the Applied Population Research Unit at the University of Glasgow, a minimum target figure of 35 responses was identified as the lowest limit for statistical inferences.

   The calculation of the target number of respondents for each variate (e.g. New Town) of each control variables (e.g. Settlement Type) was a three stage process.

   a) For each variable, the total *number* of lone parents from each *variate* was calculated.
   b) The variate total (number of lone parents) was divided by the variable total to specify its proportional incidence.
   c) These proportions were multiplied by 0.35 to specify how many control sample survey respondents would be required to ensure that the control sample mirrored the regional composition of the lone parent population on each variable. These figures are presented for each variate of each control variables in Table 4.3.

2) *Selection of Locales*: The guiding principle was to select a combination of locales that would duplicate the regional composition of each variable for the lone parent population. This was a three stage process.

   a) Identification of hypothetical *combinations* of locales whose collective profile matched the *target profiles* of individual [unspecified] locales whose collective profile is known as a *target set*). Four target sets were identified.
   b) Actual locales which matched one of the target profiles of each locale set were identified. Suitable locales for each target profile could only be found for one of the four sets.
   c) For this set, one locale was chosen for each target profile.

   Table 4.4 summarises the nature of the locale set, in terms of its profile character, the number of matching locales for each individual profile and the locale used in the control sample proper. The final list of locales were chosen so as to minimise the efforts involved in both the selection of

Table 4.3
: Control Sample Target Characteristics

VARIABLE

Target Character/ Survey Response Target / Proportion of Strathclyde Lone Parent Population In Such Locations

SETTLEMENT TYPE[1]			AREAL WELL-BEING[2]			PROPORTION OF LONE PARENT OF ALL FAMILIES		
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
De-Industrial	5	[14]	Well-Above Average	5	[14]	0- 9%	3	[9]
Rural	1	[3]	Above Average	5	[14]	10-14%	11	[31]
Primary/Secondary	10	[29]	Below Average	17	[49]	15-19%	8	[23]
Peri-Urban	2	[6]	Well-Below Average	8	[23]	20-24%	4	[11]
Commuter	1	[3]				25-29%	6	[17]
New Town	2	[6]				30%+	3	[9]
(Glasgow) City	14	[40]						

Source : calculated from Strathclyde Regional Council (91)
Notes 1 - classification is a modification of Pacione (85)
2 - classification from Pacione (85 & 86)

Table 4.4
Control Sample Locations : Key Characteristics

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Johnstone	5	De-Industrial	15-19%	Below	5
2	Carnwrath	1	Rural	10-14%	Above	4
3	Renfrew	10	Primary/Secondary	10-14%	Below	26
4	Blackwood	2	Peri-Urban	0- 9%	Below	11
5	Inchinnan	1	Commuter	0- 9%	Above	4
6	Irvine	2	New Town	25-29%	Well Above	3
7	Queen Pk/Crosshill	3	City	15-19%	Well Above	3
8	Crookston/Cowglen	4	City	20-24%	Well Below	2
9	Linn Pk/Castlemilk	4	City	25-29%	Well Below	2
10	P-shilds/Shawlands	3	City	30+%	Above	1

Source (D,E,F,G) : calculated from Strathclyde Regional Council (91)
LEGEND A - Locale Target Profile Number
B - Control Sample Location
C - Target Number of Cases
D - Settlement Type
E - Proportion of Lone Parent Families (of all families)
F - Well-Being Rating
G - Number of locales within Strathclyde that matched this profile (D, E and F)

addresses from the Electoral Register and from fieldwork. Thus, the ten individual control locales were grouped into three geographical areas:

a) All four 'city' locales were concentrated on the South side of Glasgow.
b) A cluster of three locales were selected from North-East Renfrewshire, immediately south of Glasgow.
c) Two rural locales were selected from Clydesdale District.

The tenth location selected was Irvine New Town.

3) *Selection of Addresses* : Having selected the locales in which the control sample would be undertaken, the final stage was to select households/families within each. The Electoral Register for Strathclyde Region was used for this purpose. This holds the names of all adults at each address within the region who are registered to vote and is updated annually. The information within the Register is organised hierarchically over four levels;

a) Entries for each street are listed sequentially by house number
b) Streets are listed alphabetically for each Enumeration District.
c) Enumeration Districts are listed sequentially for each District Ward.
d) District Wards are organised alphabetically for each Regional Electoral Division.

Using 1987 Voluntary Population Survey (hereafter V.P.S.) data (S.R.C. 90), it was estimated that one in every sixteen households in Strathclyde is a lone parent household. Thus, sixteen households would need to be visited before a lone parent was found. For a sample of 35, this would involve a door-to-door survey of 560 households, i.e. 16x35. However, with refusals and absent households, the number of households that would need to be contacted to achieve a sample of thirty-five lone parents would be considerably higher.

However, it has already been demonstrated that lone parent households are unevenly distributed over space/place. The distribution of lone parent households was known for Enumeration District. Thus, rather than use the regional average to approximate the number of households to be visited, it was more efficient to calculate this for each Enumeration District. Thus, fewer households would have to be visited in areas with an above average concentration of lone parents, while extra households would have to be visited in areas with a below average concentration of lone parent households.

Reference should also be made to the withdrawal of S.R.C.'s offer to provide the basis for a sampling frame through their V.P.S. While a strategy that fulfilled the criteria laid down in Table 4.3 was always intended, the means originally intended to achieve this was the V.P.S. database. Had it been known earlier that it was not available, then an alternative (equally 'conventional') sampling frame would have been used, reducing the need for a control sample.

4.4.1d Distribution Strategy

In the pilot and main versions of the LPQoL questionnaire, a dual distribution strategy was applied, i.e. distribution among lone parent groups and self-collection of questionnaires from public places.

LONE PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS: Three approaches were used:

1) Posting questionnaires with a cover letter to the secretary of the local groups.
2) Contacting regional co-ordinators of One-Plus and seeking their assistance in distributing questionnaires among groups in their local area.
3) Using the central administration of the lone parent support group network to distribute them to local groups.

All three were used for One-Plus, strategies '1' and '3' were used for Gingerbread and strategy '3' was used for Singles Clubs. In the pilot stage, six lone-parent support groups, were contacted to see if their members would complete questionnaires. These groups had shown an interest during the interview stage. These were from Irvine, Paisley & District and Lennoxtown (Gingerbread) and Castlemilk, Busby & Dalmellington (all One Plus). In the main survey, more lone parent support groups were surveyed.

SELF-COLLECTION POINTS: Public places were visited and the most senior representative from within was asked if the questionnaires could be displayed in a prominent place. The questionnaires were placed within a pouch with the message '*Single Parents : Please take one*' clearly visible from the front. Each pouch held five questionnaires. There are eight reasons why a personal visit to individual institutions is preferable to a direct distribution strategy from a central authority:

1) Not all public services have such a hierarchy, e.g. doctor's surgeries.
2) Some of the hierarchies are at the District Level. Thus with nineteen districts in Strathclyde Region, the benefits of central distribution are reduced.
3) Financial concerns favoured personal distribution; the ESRC would refund travel expenditure, but would not refund postage expenses.
4) Not all public services points are suitable for a lone parent survey. Fieldwork prevents wasting resources in unsuitable places which appeared suitable from documentary sources.
5) Similarly, personal contact ensured that the most suitable place from a list of candidates was the one chosen for the research.
6) It provided the opportunity to discuss the research with personnel before the survey was opened to the public.
7) The most prominent location for the questionnaire can be found within each collection point
8) No time delays are experienced in distribution of questionnaires that may have occurred if they were passed down through the administrative hierarchy.

Table 4.5
Assumed Lone Parent Clientele Of Self-Collection Points

PUBLIC PLACES	SURVEY VERSION	ASSUMED CLIENTELE
A	B	C
a) Women's Centre	Pilot	Working class
b) Housing Associations	Pilot	Middle/Working class
c) Post Offices	Pilot	All lone parents from local catchment area
d) Doctor's Surgery	Pilot/Main	All lone parents from local catchment area
e) Library	Pilot/Main	Middle class
f) Community Centres	Pilot/Main	Working class

Naturally, there are benefits in central distribution:

1) Instructions from the higher authority may ensure that the questionnaires are treated more seriously. However, for the community education centres, a labour strike at the time of fieldwork rendered this impossible.
2) No travelling time to the various collection points.

On balance, distribution in person was deemed to be the most suitable.

In the pilot stage, six different types of 'public place' were tested to see assess whether their lone parent clientele would voluntarily take a questionnaire and return it, fully completed, i.e. libraries (3 of), community centres (4), housing association office (1), women's centre (2), Doctor's surgery (2) and local post office (3). The type of collection points were selected on the assumption that lone parents would have occasion to use these facilities. Table 4.5 states these assumptions. Where possible, more than one example of each service point was selected. All were re-visited after one week to monitor take-up rate and to re-stock with questionnaires. On the basis of the pilot experience, three types of collection point were used for the main survey, i.e. libraries, community centres and doctor's surgeries.

4.4.1e Data Preparation

CODING SURVEY RESPONSES: For the most part, the questionnaire consisted of fixed response questions for which the coding scheme was devised prior to the survey. However, there were a number of open-ended questions for which coding schemes were pre-prepared, but modified in light of survey responses. However, the locational open-ended responses, e.g. migration history, current residence required greater effort. A decision was taken to maximise the insights the survey

responses afforded of the geographical basis of QoL. Thus, geographical location was classified according to local authority housing neighbourhoods and deprivation area status, in addition to the more commonplace geographical terms of reference. As each of these had a different basis of areal classification; thus, it was not possible to code by settlement and recode (aggregate like categories) in data analysis. Thus, three separate sources were consulted for each address, i.e. A.P.T. reference maps (Strathclyde Regional Council 90a-d), Housing Area maps and either O.S. maps or local street indexes. The utility of the non conventional geographical terms of reference will become readily apparent in chapter ten.

PREPARATION OF THE COMPUTER DATABASE: Figure 4.6 includes details of the database preparation. Initially, coding sheets were prepared. The translation from coding sheets on to computer was undertaken by the 'Data Preparation and Entry Division' of the Computing Service at the University of Glasgow; two copies of the data are entered into the computer and the responses are compared. Any mismatches (mistakes) are identified and amended. It is highly probable that what you give the Dataprep service is what you get back.

DATA QUALITY REVIEW: The 'data quality review' of the survey database consisted of three stages (Figure 4.6).

1) *Coding Re-Check.*

The first stage in the data quality review was a check on the accuracy of the coding, i.e. to ensure that the Data Preparation and Coding Division were working with the correct data, the code for every questionnaire response was double-checked. The migration distance measurements were not re-checked given the time-demands involved. The vast majority of changes that had to be made were due to coding clarifications and not to coding error - coding schemes had been improved after the questionnaires had been coded.

2) *Basic Frequency Check.*

This estimates the accuracy of the coding *re-check* for selective variables. It also marks the transition from data preparation to data analysis within the research project, i.e. it involves familiarisation with the shape of the survey responses.

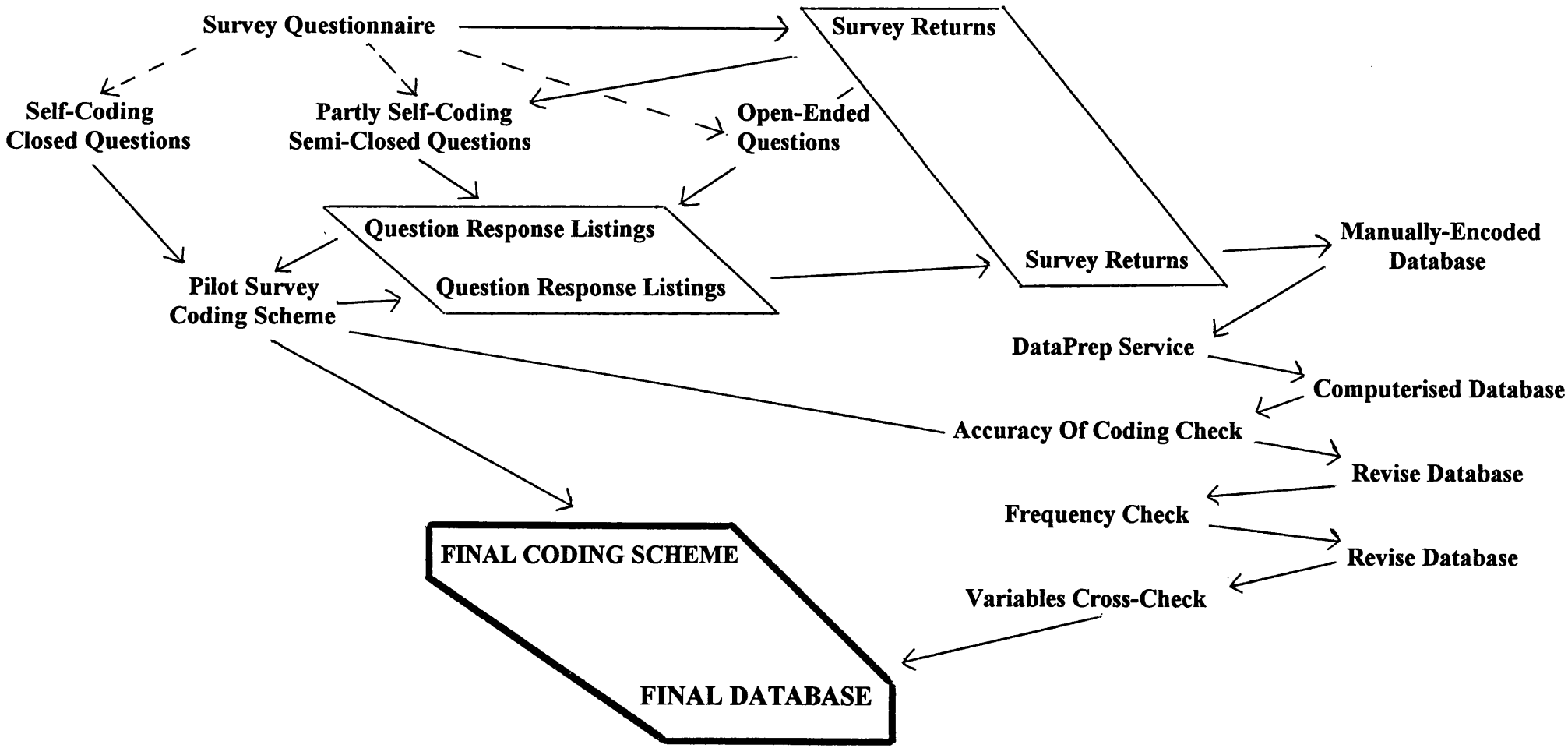
Frequency totals for all variables were tabulated by applying a statistical computer applications package (SPSS-X) to the stage three (revised computerised) database (Figure 4.6). Inspection of the computer output identifies two errors:

i) *Unfamiliar categories*, i.e. numbers that are not recognised codes. Referral to the original questionnaire identifies the correct code.

ii) It is possible to predict beforehand what the number of responses should be for some of the *'non-data' values*. As there were 55 pilot survey questionnaires, any question added after the pilot survey should have this number of non-applicable codes. This led to very few changes to the database, which tends to suggest that such a check is necessary. However, familiarisation with the distribution of values (basic frequencies) is a useful initial step in the analysis of survey data. If such a basic frequency review is undertaken, then a basic frequency check requires virtually no additional effort.

Figure 4.6

Preparation Of Computerised Database



3) *Variables Cross-Check.*

A third, and final, data check considered the pattern of responses between variables. Eighty-four such checks were conducted which served three purposes.

i) *Internal Validity of the Database.* For example, if a respondent describes him/herself as not working (Q1.8) and not receiving maintenance (Q1.9), then it would be expected that the D.S.S. would be the main source of income (Q1.9); clearly, a response of maintenance or income from this question would suggest discrepancy in the data.

ii) *Nature of Non Responses.* It was important to consider whether non-responses were question specific or group specific, i.e. examination of missing answers is best approached by considering individual questions within their question groups. For example, question 1.9 (Appendix 4) consists of six income-related questions. Examining the pattern of missing answers, helped identify whether non-responses were of a group basis (all income questions were unanswered) or an individual basis (only some questions within the group weren't answered).

iii) *High Count of Negative Responses.* Where these were found to exist, the question was reassessed to consider whether high non-response was the result of any weakness (e.g. ambiguity, irrelevance) in the survey instrument. Even when it was established that the questionnaire was satisfactory, the quantity (number) and quality (representativeness) of the valid responses was assessed. In this way, the exercise is a variable cross-check, i.e. explanations for the high level of non-responses were sought in terms of the profile characteristics of the survey population.

Overall, the variable cross-check exercise led to minor changes, but was essential in that it greatly enhanced the understanding of the LPQoL database. Most importantly of all, the rigorous scrutiny of meticulous planning involved in the preparation of the computer database, instils greater confidence in the results that follow.

4.4.1f A Representative Survey Population

The final, and most important, aspect of the LPQoL questionnaire to be considered, is the extent to which the lone parent survey population is representative of the wider lone parent population. Clearly, the issue is of fundamental importance; without such knowledge the utility of these results cannot be specified. The representativeness of the LPQoL survey population is estimated according to three criteria.

ECOLOGICAL EVALUATION - RETURN RATE: Conventional survey research is justified to talk of a response rate to a questionnaire in the sense that it measures the proportion of the sample who respond to a personal invitation to participate. However, in the thesis it is not possible to estimate the numbers of lone parents who *declined to participate*; as *self-collection* was the basis for participation. For example, maybe fifty lone parents from Carluke Health Centre chose not to complete a questionnaire, or maybe only those who returned questionnaires were the only ones to

consider. Thus, it is advisable to talk of a *return rate*, indicating that no assumptions have been made as to the proportion of non-participants. The return rate refers to the number of questionnaires that were returned from a self-collection point.

Most respondents collected the questionnaires from a self-collection point (65%), with a minority (albeit a substantial one of 35%), participating through a lone parent support group. The 173 returns from collection points were targeted at three facilities; health facilities (27), libraries (76) and community centres (59). As was outlined in Table 4.5, self collection points were selected according to their assumed lone parent clientele. It follows therefore that a lower response rate from any particular collection point *may* imply that the LPQoL sample would be underrepresented on this count. Thus, given that return rates from above, it can be concluded that the LPQoL sample will *over*represent middle class lone parents (from libraries). Taking this deduction further, this may lead to an overstatement of 'quality' from the LPQoL questionnaire results. However, this assumes that each self-collection point drew the particular type of lone parent it was assumed to attract. Thus, an individual level analysis of the profile of the LPQoL survey population is also necessary to clarify whether this is this case. Such an analysis is undertaken after the geography of the survey returns are discussed.

GEOGRAPHICAL EVALUATION - LOCATION OF RESPONDENTS: The sample characteristics of lone parents from the main and control versions of the LPQoL questionnaire is compared to the Strathclyde average for lone parents in Table 4.6. It is not useful o compare the pilot (and therefore the pilot/main) population to the regional average, given the different approach to sampling that was employed in the pilot stage (4.4.1c).

On the whole, the main survey sample is fairly representative of the lone parent population, while the control sample survey is highly representative. The main survey sample matches the lone parent population in terms of well-being (part b), although there is a marked overrepresentation of lone parents from areas with relatively fewer lone parents (part c) & from deindustrialising areas (part a), while there are underrepresentaions of lone parents from the areas of greatest lone parent concentration (part c) and cities & settlements with a primary/secondary economic base (part a). The control sample survey more closely approximates the regional norm on all these counts, although there is still an underrepresentation of lone parents from the city (part a).

Thus, there are grounds for concern over the sample of lone parents generated through the LPQoL questionnaires. In particular, where the presence of lone parents has an important influence on the experiences of lone parents (see 8.3.3c), the aggregate LPQoL population will not convey a accurate results. This geographical imbalance must be recognised in the analysis that follows. However, by the same token, the LPQoL samples are representative on socio-economic grounds. Thus, it appears from this ecological analysis that the sample is representative of the aggregate lone parent population on the characteristic which is known to be the most important cleavage in terms of life experiences. Furthermore, on the whole the samples are more representative of the lone parent population than they are different.

Table 4.6
Locational Origin Of Respondents By Sampling Frame

	PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT POPULATION				
	REGIONAL	LONE PARENT SURVEYS			
LOCATIONAL VARIABLE	AVERAGE	Pilot	Main	P/M	Control
A	B	C	D	E	F
a) SETTLEMENT TYPE[1] (%)					
City	40	21.8	25.0	(24.4)	32.4
Primary-Secondary	29	30.9	16.4	(19.3)	27.0
De-Industrial	14	38.2	38.2	(38.2)	13.5
Peri-Urban	6	0.0	9.1	(7.3)	8.1
New Town	6	9.1	1.0	(2.5)	5.4
Commuter	3	0.0	5.0	(4.0)	5.4
Rural	3	0.0	5.5	(4.4)	8.1
b) WELL-BEING[2] (%)					
Well above average	14	19.0	19.6	(19.5)	8.1
Above average	14	0.0	17.5	(15.8)	21.6
Below average	49	42.9	46.9	(46.5)	48.6
Well below average	23	38.1	16.0	(18.1)	21.6
c) % OF LONE PARENT OF ALL FAMILIES					
<10%	9	20.0	55.9	(48.7)	13.5
11-14%	31	12.7	29.5	(26.2)	35.1
15-19%	23	49.1	6.4	(14.9)	16.2
20-24%	11	0.0	4.5	(3.6)	10.8
25-29%	17	18.2	2.7	(5.8)	16.2
>29%	9	0.0	0.9	(0.7)	8.1

Source : calculated from Strathclyde Regional Council (91)
Notes 1 - classification is a modification of Pacione (85)
2 - classification from Pacione (85 & 86)
P/M - Pilot & Main survey

SOCIO-ECONOMIC EVALUATION - PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS: The key issue is the extent to which the survey population is representative of the British lone parent population. One-tailed chi-square tests were used to compare the sample population against expected population profiles (estimated British profile) and to compare the sample generated via voluntary take-up with the sample generated via more conventional distribution strategies.

However, before this evaluation begins, two points, which are of fundamental significance, should be recognised;

1) There is *no comprehensive register* of lone-parent families that can be used as a sampling frame. Without this foundation it is perhaps to be expected that (larger) biases will result.
2) The degree to which the *Strathclyde* lone parent population matches the *British* population is unclear. That is, it is conceivable that the sample could represent the former, thereby misrepresenting the latter. The geography of lone parents is discussed in 5.3.

Chi-square tests were applied to compare the survey responses with that of the most recent G.H.S. (G.B. average) for thirteen socio-economic variables. The results of these tests are presented in Table 4.7. Also included for comparative purposes are the results of a recent national survey of lone parents in the U.K.; the 1991 D.S.S. commissioned survey of Bradshaw & Millar. Initially, it seems the results are most discouraging. The chi-square statistic (not given in Table 4.7) suggests that the survey population is only comparable to the G.B. lone parent population for 'sex' (row b) and 'living arrangement' (row l).

However, there are four considerations that counter the conclusion. First, there is a similar *pattern of responses.* For example, the 'age of youngest child' (row d) failed the statistical significance test (differences between the two populations were recognised); however, the trend is identical to the G.B. average (decreasing proportions for older ages). Indeed, eleven of the thirteen variables exhibit the same general pattern as the G.B. average.

Second, some differences are *partial.* For example, the tenure profile of the LPQoL survey population only differs in terms of owner-occupation. When owner occupation is controlled, the proportional split between private rented and public rented is comparable to that of the G.B. average. Similarly, for marital status, it is only the ranks of divorced and single lone parents are reversed.

Third, some differences are *superficial.* For example, for 'work patterns' and 'relation to the head of household', the bias reflects imbalances in other variates. Thus, for example, while the significance level (100% = significant difference) is 99.9% for working female lone parents as against the G.B. average, this falls to 18.3% for the divorced, 33.3% for single and 57.4% for separated female lone parents; all of which fall far short of the accepted lower value level of 95% significance.

Finally, the sampling frame *performs equally well to other smaller-sized sample surveys* of lone parents. Taking Bradshaw & Millar (91) as an example;

1) The results are comparable for 'living arrangements' (col. l).
2) Results are broadly comparable for the 'age of youngest child' (col. d) and 'proportions among renters' (col. k).
3) B/M perform better (are closer to the G.B. trend) for 'ethnicity' (col. g).
4) B/M perform worse in terms of 'marital status' (col. a) and 'sex' (col. b).

On comparing the characteristics of their sample to that of the G.H.S., Bradshaw & Millar considered that :

> *" the sample appeared to be very similar to other estimates of lone parent characteristics ... For this reason, ... it was decided not to attempt to reweight the stock sample "*

Furthermore, the characteristics for which the greatest differences were found between the survey population and the G.B. lone parent population (ethnicity and marital status) are recognised as inherent sampling problems faced by lone parent surveys.

To summarise, the lone parent survey population is not a mirror image of the G.B. lone parent population. However, when survey returns are studied in closer detail, i.e. the response patterns, variate level analysis, imbalances across variables and the performance relative to other lone parent

Table 4.7
Lone Parent Characteristics : National & LPQoL Surveys

		PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT POPULATION OF EACH TYPE					
		G.H.S.	B/M	Pilot	Main	(P/M)	Cnrl
a) **STATUS**	Single	(37.3) 40.0	37	26.5	33.3	(32.1)	19.4
	Divorced	(35.3) 37.9	44	42.9	36.2	(37.4)	37.4
	Separated	(20.6) 22.1	20	24.5	29.1	(28.2)	36.1
	Widowed	(6.9) --	--	6.1	1.4	(2.3)	8.3
b) **SEX**	Male	11.3	5	5.5	8.4	(7.8)	2.7
c) **AGE (PARENT)**	<25	--	24	25.5	13.8	(16.1)	16.2
	25-29	--	21	23.6	27.5	(26.7)	21.6
	30-34	--	20	16.4	24.8	(23.1)	13.5
(35-49)	35-39	--	(33)	20.0	21.6	(21.1)	32.4
(>50)	>39	--	(3)	14.5	12.4	(12.8)	16.2
d) **AGE (YOUNGEST CHILD)**	0-4	42	46	35.7	51.7	(49.3)	41.7
	5-9	26	26	42.9	39.1	(39.7)	22.2
	10-15	26	21	16.7	7.8	(9.2)	29.7
	16 plus	5	6	4.8	1.3	(1.8)	5.4
e) **NUMBER OF CHILDREN**	1	--	53	49.1	43.3	(44.5)	35.1
	2	--	32	25.5	34.7	(32.7)	43.2
	3	--	11	14.5	16.6	(16.2)	10.8
	4 plus	--	4	10.9	5.5	(6.7)	10.8
f) **LP DURATION**	up to 6mnth	--	3	1.8	6.8	(5.8)	6.3
	1 year	--	12	5.5	14.6	(12.8)	21.9
	2 years	--	28	27.3	29.7	(29.2)	31.3
	3 years	--	43	43.6	42.0	(42.3)	53.1
	5 years	--	52	63.6	61.2	(61.7)	81.3
g) **WHITE ETHNIC GROUP**		--	89	100	99.6	(99.6)	100
h) **EMPLOYMENT**	Working	40	40	42.9	47.0	(46.1)	30.3
(if working)	30+ hours/week	38.5	47.5	42.9	38.9	(39.9)	--
i) **FEMALE RECEIVING MAINTENANCE**		32	--	19.1	17.9	(18.2)	--
j) **HIGHEST LEVEL/EDUC.**	Diploma+	11	8	19.2	18.9	(19.0)	0.0
	'O' or 'H' Grade/Vocational	49	46	21.2	19.4	(19.8)	100.0
	Other	2	2	0.0	4.5	(3.6)	48.5
	None	38	45	59.6	61.7	(61.3)	0.0
k) **TENURE**	Owner Occupation	36	28	12.5	16.2	(15.5)	5.6
	Local Authority	57	57	82.5	67.0	(70.2)	80.6
	Other Rented	7	15	5.0	16.8	(14.3)	13.9
l) **HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD**	Yes	86	85	--	87.9	--	--
m) **MIGRANT (MOVED WITHIN YEAR)**		17	--	33.3	33.3	(33.3)	--
n) **ONE PARENT GROUP MEMBER?**		--	--	57.4	31.7	(36.8)	5.4
o) **RESIDENT IN AN A.P.T.**		NA	NA	52.1	27.5	(32.6)	29.7

Sources: General Household Survey 1992 (OPCS 1994)
Haskey (1993, General Household Survey based)
Lone Parent QoL Questionnaires (pilot/control/main versions)
Bradshaw & Millar (1991)

Notes: -- : Data not available
NA : Not applicable

surveys, it can be concluded that the survey sample is broadly similar to the G.B. average and that the sample compares favourably to other lone parent surveys. The degree to which such imbalances that do exist are a function of the sampling frame, as opposed to a 'Strathclyde factor' is discussed in 5.3.

4.4.2 TWO PARENT QUALITY OF LIFE QUESTIONNAIRE

The fieldwork was undertaken alongside the control sample of the LPQoL questionnaire, i.e. during the months of October and November in 1992. The survey provided QoL data from which partnered parents' opinions could be compared to those of lone parents. The questionnaire consisted of five sections (Appendix 6):

1) Importance of 14 life domains.
2) Satisfaction with eight aspects of their life and family support network.
3) Socio-economic profile questions.
4) Evaluation of performance over seven life roles
5) Sources of support.

The questionnaire consisted of two pages on one A4 sheet of paper. The same concerns that influenced the construction of the LPQoL questionnaire applied.

The sampling frame adopted was that used in the control sample questionnaire to achieve a representative sample of lone parents. Two points should be noted:

1) *Size*: In Strathclyde, there are five times as many two parent households as there are lone parent households. Thus, the target number of partnered parents was five times greater than that for lone parents, to ensure that a representative sample of partnered parents would be achieved; a target number of 165 partnered parent responses was set.
2) *Definition*: The two parent sample population was a 'representative sample of partnered parents from areas in which lone parents reside' and not a 'representative sample of two parent families'. Thus each, locale's target figure for lone parents were multiplied by a factor of five to specify the target number of two parent families. This was the most appropriate sampling frame to use, as it focuses attention on the (real) differences between family types within similar circumstances/environments, rather than measuring differences that are known to exist between those in dissimilar circumstances/environments.

As in the LPQoL survey questionnaire, a door-to-door canvass was used. As only one parent was required to complete the questionnaire, the adult who came to the door was invited to participate.

4.5 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

There is one final aspect of the research framework that must be considered, i.e. how the empirical data was analysed. Data analysis techniques can be grouped according to whether there is a predetermined response scheme (4.5.3) or not (4.5.2). Beforehand, the nature of the data and the decision-making underlying the application of analytical techniques are discussed.

4.5.1 ANALYSIS OF QUALITY OF LIFE DATA

4.5.1a Level Of Data

QoL research involves the definition and/or measurement of quality of life across and among population groups. This involves either non-quantitative data (nominal/categorical - where respondents list what is important/is a source of satisfaction to them) or quantitative data (ordinal or interval - where respondents evaluate a list of life concerns). Where the quantitative measurement is ordinal, the relative QoL values are in order, but the interval between these points on the scale are not necessarily constant. Within the thesis, both definition and evaluation are measured, using rating scales, by each respondent.

Do rating scales generate partly quantitative (ordinal) or fully quantitative (interval) data? For example, is the difference between extremely important and very important the same as that between very important and quite important? If the answer to this question is no, i.e. it generates partly quantitative data, then the calculation of the *average* importance of dimensions is invalid. This, in turn, invalidates the calculation of the *multiple additive* measure of QoL (in which the respondents' evaluations of the importance of domains are used to weight the respondents' average satisfaction with these domains). Clearly, the issue is of central importance in the thesis.

The explanation of the value range of the rating scale is the key issue. If a purely descriptive labelling system is used, then it would be partly quantitative data that would be produced. As there would be multiple interpretations of labels by different respondents (e.g. extremely important may mean different things to different people), the data would be internally consistent for each respondent, but not externally consistent across the survey population. However, a descriptive label is useful in that it provides guidance for the respondents, i.e. it creates a more user friendly interface than numerical values alone. Thus, within the thesis, each descriptive label is associated with a numerical value, e.g. the importance options range from 1 (not at all important) through unit intervals to 5 (extremely important). The descriptive labels position the numerical values on behalf

of the respondents. Thus, there is a discrete variable range that approximates interval level distributions.

What are the implications for the analysis of data within the thesis? The data is best described as ordinal-interval, i.e. the descriptive labelling compromises the integrity of the interval level measurements. Therefore, it is inappropriate to perform advanced interval level data analysis on the survey data, i.e. where the aim is to provide precise information on the 'distance' between cases. However, that data is of sufficient accuracy to validate the calculation of mean values (and therefore to contribute toward a MA model), providing that caution is employed in the discussion of small-scale differences.

4.5.1b Analytical Approach To QoL Data

Are sophisticated data analysis techniques suited for the goals which QoL research strives to achieve? Such advanced techniques have been used as tools to explain QoL and to order QoL datasets. For example, principal components analysis has been used to reduce the QoL data set to a smaller number of key component profiles (e.g. Pacione 86) and log linear analysis has been used to specify the structural interrelationships between a number of explanatory variables (e.g. Cadwaller 92).

Many attempts to understand QoL over-reduce the size and complexity of the dataset. It is now argued that such approaches are fundamentally flawed; the object of QoL research should be to explore the complex relationships that constitute QoL - reducing explanation to its key components should not be the only goal. Furthermore, the narrower search for prime *explanations*, rather than the search to understand the *complexity of QoL relationships* ignores those significant (substantially and statistically) associations that do not perform an explanatory function. If the object of QoL analysis is to understand the QoL of lone parents, then it is also important to recognise such cleavages among the lone parent population, regardless of explanatory potential. Consequently, in the thesis lower order data analysis techniques are used, e.g. univariate descriptive analysis and bivariate crosstabulations. The nature of the bivariate relationships are assessed and then built up into a multivariate report of lone parents' QoL; this achieves the same outcome as the advanced level analysis, but additionally maintains the complexity of QoL.

The approach to QoL analysis in the thesis differs in one other respect. The majority of QoL research focuses on *summary* measures or, less commonly, on specific domains. Thus, there are no attempts to study QoL across a range of life concerns, or to study how overall QoL varies in comparison to domain QoL. In the thesis, these goals are pursued, i.e. domain level analysis is discussed within the context of overall QoL.

4.5.2 DATA ANALYSIS : OPEN ENDED RESPONSE SCHEME

No interview responses were constrained by a predetermined response scheme. Of the documentary applications, some provided free-response data, e.g. diary-day book, others did not, e.g. secondary data analysis. Finally, within the questionnaire, a limited number of questions were open-ended. Such data was analysed either in a quantitative fashion (to portray general patterns within the data - a nomothetic approach) or in a qualitative fashion (to identify cases which were uniquely significant - an idiographic approach).

Frequency counts of responses to open-ended questions was a useful starting point for analysis, e.g. if twenty interviewees answered that loneliness was a problem of lone parenthood but only three responded that a shortage of money was a problem, then it would be reasonable to conclude that loneliness is more of a problem for lone parents.

For interview data in particular, prioritising of information was also taken into account. It was assumed that the most important factors would be discussed first. However, the context of response provided a safety check, i.e. the manner in which the response was given and the depth in which the issue is discussed are used to re-prioritise the 'ranking' that was based on the response order.

Clearly, this is an imprecise science. Furthermore, data interpretation problems are compounded by the nature of the sample and the small number of interviews. However, it must be recognised that the interviews were a means to an end and not an ends in themselves, i.e. the objective was to raise awareness of key themes which were then translated into research tools for systematic analysis in the LPQoL questionnaire. Thus, it is the *qualitative* significance of the individual responses and the *quantitative* incidence of response that are important and not the *quantitative* relative importance of each response. However, in the LPQoL questionnaire the objective of the open-ended response questions were different, i.e. the latter goal is the most significant.

4.5.3 DATA ANALYSIS : PREDETERMINED RESPONSE SCHEME

Most empirical data in the thesis came from questions with predetermined response options. Some of this data was generated from documentary applications, e.g. the national survey data of lone parents. However, most came from the LPQoL questionnaire.

4.5.3a Univariate Analysis

Descriptive analysis of individual variables was the first stage in the analysis of the survey returns. Univariate techniques are particularly useful in chapter 5 where the characteristics of lone parents are discussed, and in chapter 7 where the distribution of QoL is used to assess whether it is valid to

conceive of a lone parent position on QoL. In addition to being a useful summary measure, the mean was used in the calculation of the MA model of QoL.

MEASURES OF CENTRAL TENDENCY: As was discussed within 4.5.2a, the *arithmetic mean* was calculated for ordinal/interval level data (e.g. Table 6.6, col. c). The arithmetic mean was also calculated to summarise interval level data in the thesis, e.g. duration of lone parenthood. For ordinal level data, grouped-based arithmetic means were calculated when appropriate, e.g. for the age of lone parent, where the responses were for age bands. Furthermore, for some categorical data, reference was made to the *modal* group (Table 6.6, col. f). The modal group was an important complimentary statistic to the mean. Thus, the *typical* lone parent perspective was specified (mode), in addition to the *average* lone parent assessment (mean). Finally, the *proportion* of lone parents responding in a particular way was also calculated. The qualitative descriptive basis of these assessments is less abstract to understand than the numerical mean value; furthermore, these data reductions facilitate bivariate analysis.

MEASURES OF DISPERSION: The *variance* measure of dispersion was used in the thesis. The variance is computed by summarising the squared difference from the mean for all observations and then dividing by one less than the total number of observations (Norussis 92). The value ranges from 0 (no variance), with higher numbers reflecting greater variance. this statistic is employed to compare the relative dispersion of values across domains for importance and satisfaction (Table 7.3 & 7.4).

4.5.3b Bivariate Analysis

The chi-square test features prominently in the analysis of the QoL data. For example, one-tailed chi-square tests are used to compare the 'fit' between the characteristics of the survey sample and those of the British lone parent population. Two-tailed chi-square tests are used to estimate the relationships between two variables, i.e. an explanatory and a response variable. Finally, chi-square is the basis from which multivariate analysis begins.

Chi square is a measure of the degree of difference between categorical (ordered and unordered) variables. It is not a measure of the strength of a relationship, nor of the direction of a relationship between variables. Rather, it merely indicates whether there is a statistically significant difference. Application of a chi square test demands that certain conditions are fulfilled:

1) *Nature of Data*. Only categorical data counted in the form of frequencies is permitted
2) *Number of Cases*. Must exceed twenty.
3) *Expected Frequencies*. In a 2x2 (and 2x1) contingency table, i.e. with one degree of freedom, each of the cells must have an expected frequency of at least five. Otherwise, not more than one-fifth of cells are permitted to have expected frequencies of less than five.
4) *Independence*: There must be no autocorrelation between variables under analysis, i.e. the response variable must not be *dependent* on the explanatory variable(s) in any way. What is being sought is the presence of *independent*, but significantly related relationships.

Having fulfilled these conditions, the application of a chi square test is a three stage process:

1) Variates of explanatory variables are hypothesised to exhibit significant differences in terms of a response variable.
2) Significance level is set, normally set at 95%, but 90% for gender, given that there are fewer cases and that this was hypothesised to be an important cleavage among lone parents.
3) The chi-square test is applied.
4) The outcome is interpreted for statistical significance.

However, this is not the conclusion to the exercise. Rather, the exercise has merely identified whether or not a *statistically* significant relationship exists, i.e. one for which it is reasonable to assume that the differences are not the product of chance factors (sampling error). Having identified relationships between explanatory and response variables that are *statistically significant*, the precise nature of this relationship must be considered. This involves contingency table interpretation. Only the *regular* relationships are of substantive interest are valid as (possible) explanations of quality of life.

One further point to note is that the results are influenced by the categorisation of the response variables (Table 4.8). For example, Table 4.8 demonstrates that as the number of categories of the dependent variable increase, the less significant 'education' becomes. In contrast, marital status is not statistically significant with two categories, yet is significant at the 99.5% level when there are four QoL categories. Clearly, insights would be overlooked if the analysis was restricted to a single classification of QoL. Thus, in the thesis, multiple classifications of the dependent variables are used to identify statistically significant relationships.

4.5.3c Multivariate Analysis

Bivariate associations may be statistically and substantially significant, but this does not necessarily imply that the independent variable holds explanatory power, i.e. significant relationships may only be a reflection of *associations* with another variable that *does* influence the QoL outcome. Thus, it is important to progress beyond bivariate analysis to consider the multivariate explanations for QoL. However, in doing so, the non-explanatory statistically significant associations are maintained within the explanatory framework. This is important in two respects:

Table 4.8
Classification Of The Dependent Variable and Statistical Significance : Quality of Life By Education Level and Marital Status

	CHI-SQUARE PROBABILITY LEVEL (threshold)		
	QUALITY OF LIFE		
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	NUMBER OF CATEGORIES OF DEPENDENT VARIABLE 2	3	4
A	B	C	D
a) Education Level	0.0109 (x)	0.0478 (x)	0.0486 (x)
b) Marital Status	>1.0000 ---	0.0318 (x)	0.0019 (*)

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)
LEGEND - x Significant at the 95% level
- * Significant at the 99% level
Notes : 1 Lone parents who are educated to diploma level (or above) are more likely to experience a higher QoL (see 8.3.1b)
2 Divorced lone parents are more likely than single lone parent, who in turn, are more likely than separated lone parents to experience a higher QoL (see 8.3.4a)

1) Facilitates a critical review of the explanations proposed on the basis of the survey results.
2) Maintains the complexity of the QoL outcome. That is, these differences are real, even though they do not have explanatory power.

It is important in presenting the chi square association maps that these two types of variable are distinguished. Graphic presentation strategies were employed to this end (Figures 8.1 to 8.29):

1) Explanatory factors are in bold typeface. The direction of the causal explanation is also in bold typeface.
2) Non explanatory factors are in normal typeface. All significant associations that do not perform a causal explanatory function (all associations with non-explanatory variables and those associations of explanatory variables that do not perform an explanatory function) are also in normal typeface.

How then are these chi square association maps constructed? The process consisted of five stages:

1) Significant associations (statistical and substantial) between QoL and an explanatory variable (profile characteristic) are identified. Significant relationships are those attaining a 95% probability level (or 90% for gender).
2) For each aspect of QoL, all significant associations between explanatory variables (profile characteristics) are specified.
3) A matrix is completed showing all associations among profile characteristics and between profile characteristics and QoL (see Figure 10.2).

4) The associations with QoL are graded according to whether they are significant at the 95%, 99% or 99.5% level. This determines where the explanatory variable is positioned, relative to QoL, on the summary multivariate diagram.
5) These links and the strengths of these links are conveyed visually on the form of a chi square association map (see Figures 9.1 to 9.29)

The chi square association maps are the pinnacle of the (internal) QoL analysis, and each is discussed at length in chapter nine.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The objective of this chapter has been to lay bare the research strategy of the thesis. This aim has been met for the, conceptual (4.1.1 and 4.1.2), theoretical (4.1.3), structural (4.2), methodological (4.3 and 4.4) and analytical (4.5) bases of the thesis. This has involved lengthy discussion. The attention accorded to the issues (in the context of the thesis) is partly motivated by a concern with openness - to provide information beyond the research results. However, it is more than this. The innovative and adaptive approaches adopted within the thesis (in terms of approaching QoL and sampling the population, respectively), demand that the utility of the research foundations are first demonstrated, before reporting the empirical findings. More generally, there is a concern to demonstrate the careful thought and rigorous critique that was employed in throughout the thesis. Given this, all contributions within this chapter are of significance. However, there are five that should be emphasised.

First, *a new interpretation of QoL* has been developed (4.1). QoL is conceived as consisting of an internal (subject focus) and an external (comparative focus) component. Furthermore, it has been shown how QoL is related to other concepts with which it is often confused. It is argued that QoL is tangible, it is not a vague abstract concept. However, this tangibility implies that more limited research objectives are drawn; a more appropriate basis of analysis for QoL is a focus on the shared concerns among a subject group; generalist approaches are always doomed to fail their QoL objectives. Most importantly, it is argued that there is no single way of approaching QoL; many approaches (both theoretical and methodological) may be employed within the constraints defined by the conceptualisation of QoL. Together, these developments afford the potential for more clarity of purpose in QoL research in the years to come.

Second, the *utility of multi-method and multi-stage approaches* was demonstrated (4.2); these may not be necessary in every research project, but it is clear that such approaches led to a more complete understanding of lone parents within the thesis. Third, the *nature of the data* collected by the survey instruments was subjected to critical review (4.5.1). The key finding was that the nature of the data allows for a multiple additive model of QoL to be developed. Fourth, a new 'bottom-up' *approach to the multivariate analysis* of QoL was offered (4.5.3c). This means that all significant cleavages among lone parents can be reported within a summary diagram that differentiates between those which perform an explanatory function and those which do not.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly of all, it has been shown that the *survey sample is representative* of the wider lone parent population (4.4.1f). While there are some minor misrepresentations (e.g. under representation of non-white lone parents), the overriding conclusion is that the analysis that follows is based on a sample of lone parents which adequately reflects the wider lone parent population. While a sensitivity to Strathclyde factors and points of difference must still be maintained, the thesis will be reporting results that are of wider relevance.

CHAPTER FIVE

LONE PARENT CHARACTERISTICS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers the characteristics of lone parents, lone parent families and lone parent households in Great Britain by drawing upon national survey data and the Lone Parent Quality of Life (hereafter, LPQoL) questionnaire results (pilot, main & control versions). Previous chapters in the thesis have already contributed toward an understanding of the character of lone parents; in particular, chapter two's review of the lone parent literature provided a wide ranging account of the composition of the lone parent population and chapter four demonstrated that the character of the survey population is generally representative of the British lone parent population. This chapter further develops our understanding of the lone parent population by addressing hitherto neglected issues, which are central to the concerns of the thesis.

Section 5.2, gauges the extent to which the characteristics of lone parents are attributable to their *lone* parent status. To address this issue, lone parents are compared to that population group with which they have most in common, i.e. partnered parents. Two bases of comparison are used, i.e. national surveys and the LPQoL control sample surveys. The former answers the question directly for Great Britain (national scale of analysis). The latter introduces a geographical control factor in that it assesses whether there are any differences between lone parents and partnered parents when the populations are drawn from the same residential environments. It is theoretically possible that national variation would not feature at the local scale, i.e. as a result of uneven geographical distribution of these groups over space. Areas of deprivation in Strathclyde Region are used as a control case study to estimate the extent of localised differences. Both approaches share the common goal of specifying the unique features of *lone* parenthood (but at different levels of geographical specificity).

Section 5.3 deals directly with the variations in types of lone parent over space. While such variations are known to exist (as noted above), as yet there has been no systematic analysis of this geography of lone parents; knowledge of such variation comes by way of more general research, that does not tease out the full significance of the lone parent dimension. The analysis is conducted over three spatial scales using national survey data and results from the LPQoL questionnaires (pilot & main versions), i.e. Strathclyde in a national context; variations within the District Council areas of Strathclyde and local variations between deprivation areas.

Finally, in section 5.4, profile characteristics that are widely used in social science research are examined in greater depth using the LPQoL questionnaire data (pilot, main & control versions). All too often, profile characteristics are used as surrogates or explanations for deprivation without any attempt to reflect upon the condition itself. For example, car ownership is widely acknowledged as the best single indicator of income (Bradford et al 93), which is a key aspect of deprivation (hence, the level of car ownership in an area can be used to surrogate for the level of deprivation). Similarly, where deprivation has already been measured, car ownership may help explain variations

(deprivation is higher where car ownership is lower, reflecting the lower income of residents in that area). In each case, knowledge of car ownership is a means to an end, rather than a significant finding in its own right. Before using profile characteristics to estimate (external) lone parent QoL in chapter six and to explain (internal) lone parent QoL in chapters seven-to-ten, the character of lone parents are discussed in more depth and in a multivariate context. For example, in addition to specifying the level of educational attainment, section 5.4.1c also specifies when education was undertaken relative to lone parent status. In a similar vein, more detailed information is provided for employment (5.4.1a), income (5.4.1b), transportation & housing (5.4.1c) & family structure (5.4.2a & 5.4.2b) and in each section, the inter-relationships between characteristics are synthesised to produce typologies of lone parents according to socio-economic status (5.4.1f), familial/demographic status (5.4.2c) and lone parent status (5.4.3c). This latter typology is based on aspects of lone parenthood that have been completely overlooked by previous studies (5.4.3).

These findings are of interest in their own right. However, furthering an understanding of lone parenthood *per se* is a subsidiary function in the chapter. More importantly, this review of lone parent characteristics aims to inform the analysis of lone parent quality of life (hereafter, QoL). It does so in two ways:

1) *By specifying the prevalence of population traits among the population*: Such information complements the QoL analysis and is important when estimating the potential impact of policy interventions. For example, although men are more likely to be dissatisfied with their neighbourhood (8.3.2b), any policy intervention aimed at improving the neighbourhood life of male lone parents would only have a limited impact on *lone parent* neighbourhood satisfaction, as this particular group only represents one-tenth of the lone parent population (Table 4.7).
2) *By examining the inter-relationships between characteristics*: Such information will be utilised later in the thesis when there is a statistically significant relationship between self-evaluated QoL and a number of profile characteristics, i.e. by examining the inter-relationships among all the profile characteristics that are significantly related to QoL, the precise influence of each particular profile characteristic can be specified, i.e. a direct influence, indirect influence or, indeed, no influence whatsoever.

The findings of 5.2 and 5.3 are also used to contribute to this understanding of QoL, i.e. the cross-family comparisons of 5.2 assess whether lone parent or parental policy interventions are required to exact upon QoL and the geographical comparisons of 5.3 establish whether such policy should be sensitive to geographical variation.

5.2 LONE PARENTS AND PARTNERED PARENTS COMPARED

What, if any, are the defining characteristics of the lone parent population? Clearly, there are characteristics that arise from lone parent status, e.g. membership of a lone parent support group and previous marital status. It could, of course, be argued that such characteristics may be evident in partnered parents, as in membership of another type of support group and the previous marital status of partnered parents. However, the *lone* parent experience distinguishes them from partnered parents, e.g. a lone parent support group helps members to overcome the difficulties directly pertaining to their status as lone parents, whereas, other support groups may have quite different orientations. Similarly, and for example, being a divorced lone parent means that family adjustments arising from re-partnering are not a concern, as is the case for divorced parents who re-partner.

First, lone parents are compared to partnered parents using the published results of national surveys in Britain (5.2.1). However, such data does not convey gender variation (e.g. between women who are lone parents and women who are partnered parents) nor locational variation (i.e. do lone parents with similar characteristics reside in the same areas and/or do lone parents differ from partnered parents in the same residential environment?). To address these questions, the Lone Parent Quality of Life (hereafter, LPQoL) control sample questionnaire and the Two Parent Quality of Life (hereafter, 2PQoL) questionnaires are used (see 4.4 for more details).

5.2.1 ARE LONE PARENTS DIFFERENT? AN APPRAISAL USING NATIONAL SURVEY DATA

There are two conclusions to be drawn from this comparison of lone parents and partnered parents (Table 5.1). First, the child-composition of lone parent families is comparable to that of two parent families, i.e. they have a similar number of children (row a) and these children are of similar ages (row b). However, a second point to note is that lone parents compare less favourably on socio-economic grounds; this is expressed in terms of both socio-economic status (e.g. far more lone parents are economically inactive) and economic outcomes (e.g. more than three times the number of lone parents are tenants of a local authority). Thus, lone parents are both similar and dissimilar to partnered parents. However, it is well established that peoples of different levels of economic resource reside in different areas. How far does this geographical selection process result in lone parents residing alongside partnered parents of *similar* economic resources?

Table 5.1
Profile Of Parents In Britain
: Lone Parents And Partnered Parents Compared

		Percentage of Population of each type	
VARIABLE	VARIATE	LONE	PARTNERED
A	B	C	D
a) AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN		1.7	1.9
b) AGE OF YOUNGEST DEPENDENT CHILD	0-4	43	43
	5-9	26	24
	10-15	26	26
	16>	5	6
c) ECONOMIC STATUS	Working full-time	15	21
	Working part-time	24	42
	Unemployed	6	4
	Inactive	54	33
d) GROSS WEEKLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME	<£200	74	19
	£200.01-350	16	24
	>£350.01	11	59
e) HIGHEST EDUCATION QUALIFICATION OF FAMILY HEAD	Degree	4	14
	High. Educ. Not Degree	7	14
	Other Qualification	51	46
f) TENURE	Owner-Occupation	36	77
	Local Authority Rented	57	18
	Private Rented	7	5
g) TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION	Detached	6	25
	Semi-Detached	27	36
	Terraced	40	31
	Flat	27	7

Source: General Household Survey 1992 (OPCS 1994)

5.2.2 ARE LONE PARENTS DIFFERENT? LONE PARENTS AND PARTNERED PARENTS IN STRATHCLYDE

5.2.2a Demographic Characteristics

In similar places, lone parents were found to be younger and have fewer children (Table 5.2, parts a and c, respectively) and to have younger children (rows b & d) compared to partnered parents.

What significance can be attached to these findings? First, in general, it shows that in the same places, there are significant differences between lone parents and partnered parents in terms of demographic character (age of parent and number of children). However, a second conclusion is that there is evidence of differences in family formation. That is, in those areas of Strathclyde Region

where lone parents typically reside, lone parents became parents at an earlier age, relative to partnered parents, i.e. their children are of the same age, but they themselves are younger. This raises many interesting issues for population geographers, e.g. does family formation vary by geographical areas? Future population research should examine this issue in greater depth. Finally, the result suggests that there is no geographical control factor, i.e. lone parents are as likely to differ from partnered parents, regardless of the socio-economic character of the geographical area.

5.2.2b Socio-Economic Characteristics

The general conclusion on socio-economic condition remains the same as for the national situation, i.e. in those areas of Strathclyde in which lone parents typically reside lone parents are more likely to experience socio-economic disadvantage; indeed, the gap between lone parents and partnered parents actually increases to the extent that partnered parents are twice as likely to work, when geographical variations are controlled (compare row e of Table 5.2, with row c of Table 5.1). However, in other respects, the extent of socio-economic relative disadvantage lessens as geographical variation is controlled. This is particularly true for tenure and educational attainment. Thus, for example, lone parents are (only) twice as likely to reside in local authority accommodation when populations from similar areas are compared, whereas, on the whole, three times fewer partnered parents reside in local authority provided housing in Britain.

However, it remains the case that lone parents differ. Whether this is a consequence of lone parenthood or a reflection of the fact that different types of people become lone parents is a key issue. Using the evidence in Table 5.2, a comparison of educational experience on one hand, and employment levels & tenure on the other provides revealing insights. In the former, the differences between lone parents and partnered parents are slight, whereas, for the latter the differences are substantial (Table 5.2). Given that educational attainment is widely accepted as a determinant of both employment & tenure, then the socio-economic disadvantages experienced by lone parents is unexpected. This seems to suggest that differences between lone and partnered parents in areas in which lone parents typically reside owe less to the *personal* character than to *consequences* of lone parenthood. The geographical specificity of these results should be emphasised, i.e. in general, lone parents are less well-educated than partnered parents. The relevant point here is that even when they are compared to a population with similar levels of education attainment (partnered parents in areas in which they typically reside), other socio-economic disadvantages persist.

To conclude, when comparing partnered parents to lone parents, the local dimension is an important aspect that be considered even though the general socio-economic disadvantage and demographic similarities of the national scale are still found to exist. Thus, the key empirical point is that lone parents are more socio-economically advantaged, but that they share similar demographic profiles to partnered parents. Geographical selection processes soften, but do not blur, the socio-economic divide within bounded places.

Table 5.2
Profile Of Parents Controlling For Geographical Variation In Selected Areas Of Strathclyde Region : Lone Parents And Partnered Parents Compared

		Percentage of Survey Population of Each Type	
VARIABLE	VARIATE	LONE	PARTNERED
A	B	C	D
a) AGE OF PARENT			
	Under 25	16.2	3.2
	25-29	21.6	17.8
	30-34	13.5	21.7
	35-39	32.4	27.4
	> 39	16.2	29.9
b) AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD			
	0-4	41.7	40.6
	5-9	22.2	25.8
	10-15	36.1	33.5
c) NUMBER OF CHILDREN			
	1	35.1	17.0
	2	43.2	40.9
	3	10.8	25.2
	4 plus	10.8	17.0
d) TYPE OF FAMILY			
	Pre-School only	13.5	18.9
	Pre-School & School	28.4	24.3
	School only	36.5	43.2
	With Post-School	21.6	13.5
e) EMPLOYMENT			
	Yes	30.3	60.4
f) SOCIAL CLASS OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE			
	Professional/Managerial	10.0	21.5
	Skilled	50.0	64.5
	Partly/Un-Skilled	40.0	14.0
g) TENURE			
	Owner Occupation	5.6	41.0
	Public Sector Rented	80.6	42.3
	Other Rented	13.9	16.7
h) EDUCATION LEVEL			
	Diploma or above	0.0	3.3
	'O' or 'H' Grade	51.5	41.7
	None	48.5	55.0
i) OWN TELEPHONE?			
	Yes	59.5	79.6
j) A.P.T. STATUS			
	Reside in an A.P.T.	29.7	26.2

Sources : LPQoL (control) & 2PQoL Questionnaires

Cases : LPQoL : 35 2pQoL : 160

5.3 A GEOGRAPHY OF LONE PARENT CHARACTERISTICS

Early in the thesis, the striking variations in the geographical distribution of lone parents were detailed (Table 1.1 & Figure 1.3 in 1.2.2). However, geographical variations are not restricted to the incidence of lone parent families. That is, the profile characteristics of lone parents (the type of lone parent) also varies from place to place (and from space to space). Limited evidence for this geography was predicted in 5.2; however, this could only be inferred from a comparative basis that was not devised to estimate geographical variation among lone parents. Such an exercise is now undertaken with appropriate data. Such variation is of obvious interest to socio-population geographers. Furthermore, an appreciation of which 'types' of lone parent are prevalent in which areas, is a useful aid in understanding the geographical variations in lone parent QoL.

5.3.1 REGIONAL VARIATIONS : ARE STRATHCLYDE LONE PARENTS DIFFERENT?

Comparing the lone parent population within Strathclyde Region, to the British lone parent population is of considerable importance in the current context; as the thesis is based solely within Strathclyde Region, such an analysis indicates whether the thesis has more general (rather than regional) significance, i.e. if the Strathclyde lone parent population is generally similar to the British lone parent population, then the survey results may have wider significance.

Published data from the 1991 Census of Population in Britain is used to examine this issue. Other national surveys, such as the General Household Survey (OPCS various), provide more detailed information on the familial and personal characteristics of lone parents. However, unlike such surveys, the national census has a level of coverage which permits regional analysis of results. Thus, the census is the only data source able to accommodate current requirements. Table 5.3 compares the Strathclyde lone parent population to that of the Rest of Scotland and the Rest of Britain in terms of ethnicity, gender, economic activity patterns, type of housing and migration patterns. The selection of characteristics reflects the availability of data (from the census) and the decision to use other profile characteristics from the census as surrogates for deprivation (see 7.2 & 7.3). The indicators now under discussion cover both demographic and socio-economic character and are sufficient to address the question of whether the Strathclyde lone parent population is different from the British or Scottish lone parent populations.

The data suggests that the Strathclyde lone parents are similar to those from other parts of the nation, i.e. they are predominately white, women and a significant proportion are recent migrants. Furthermore, of the working lone parent population, males are most likely to be employed on a full-time basis, while females are equally likely to be part-time workers. Thus, it would seem that the

Table 5.3
Lone Parent Characteristics
: Lone Parent Heads Of Household With Children Under 16 In Strathclyde, Rest Of Scotland and Rest Of Britain (1991)

VARIABLE Variate	PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT POPULATION OF EACH TYPE					
	STRATHCLYDE		OTHER SCOTLAND		OTHER BRITAIN	
A (B)	C	D	E	F	G	H
a) ETHNICITY[1]						
White	99.2 (18.6)		99.3 (14.3)		90.7 (13.4)	
Black: Carribean	** (28.6)		** (26.5)		4.1 (41.9)	
Black: African	0.1 (21.1)		** (8.2)		1.4 (32.5)	
Black: Other	0.1 (19.6)		0.1 (22.9)		1.0 (45.1)	
Indian	0.1 (5.5)		0.1 (7.1)		0.8 (5.0)	
Pakistani	0.3 (5.7)		0.1 (5.4)		0.5 (6.5)	
Bangladeshi	-	-	** (4.1)		0.1 (5.3)	
Chinese	0.1 (6.2)		0.1 (5.8)		0.2 (9.4)	
Other: Asian	** (6.6)		0.1 (7.3)		0.4 (10.4)	
Other: non-Asian	0.1 (10.4)		0.2 (12.0)		0.8 (20.1)	
Born Ireland	0.6 (9.4)		0.8 (11.2)		1.8 (14.9)	
b) SEX Women	93.1		92.4		92.6	
c) ECONOMIC ACTIVITY[2]						
Full-Time	51 : 37		62 : 36		60 : 37	
Part-Time	4 : 38		5 : 44		5 : 42	
Self-Employed	10 : 2		14 : 4		17 : 5	
Other	35 : 23		20 : 16		17 : 16	
d) HOUSEHOLD SPACE						
Detached	3		7		7	
Semi-Detached	8		14		24	
Terraced	20		28		40	
Flat	68		49		23	
Other	1		2		5	
e) RECENT MIGRANTS						
Migrate within last year	16.4		17.9		16.8	

Sources : Register General Scotland (1993a), Tables 40, 43 & 59 and (1993b), Table 86 & Office Of Population Census And Surveys (1993), Tables 40, 43 and 59.

Notes : 1 - The proportion of lone parent of all ethnic households with dependent children is provided in parenthesis.
: 2 - Figures are provided separately for male (first figure) and female (second figure) lone parents.

results of a survey of lone parents in Strathclyde also apply to British lone parents. While the character of lone parents in Strathclyde is broadly comparable to that of lone parents elsewhere in Britain, there remains a possibility that 'locality effects', that are not apparent from profile characteristics, may imply that the lone parents in Strathclyde differ in some (other) way to those from outside the Region. This cannot be estimated from Census data. Thus, except for the possibility of 'locality effect', it may be assumed that the thesis has relevance beyond the boundaries of Strathclyde Region.

While the overriding feature of Table 5.3 is similarity, there are also differences of a more subtle nature between the Strathclyde and Scottish/British lone parent populations and between the Strathclyde/Scottish and British lone parent populations. For example, Strathclyde's working lone parents are more likely to be casual or temporary ('other') and less likely to be self-employed or employed on a full-time basis (part c). An exploration of the differences in the work experience of lone parents in Strathclyde should be given further consideration in future studies.

Fewer lone parents in Strathclyde (and the rest of Scotland) are from 'non-white' ethnic groups, i.e. 0.8% in Strathclyde, 0.7% in the rest of Scotland and 9.3% in the rest of Britain (part a). This reflects two factors. First, non-white ethnic groups are less prevalent in Scotland than in the rest of Britain. However, when the focus is shifted to particular ethnic groups, e.g. comparing black Caribbeans in Strathclyde, black Carribeans in Scotland and black Carribeans in Britain, a second explanation becomes apparent, i.e. while the White families are more likely to be headed by a lone parent in Strathclyde (19%) than in the rest of Britain (13%) there is either no difference (Indian & Pakistani), or a higher prevalence of lone parenthood outside Strathclyde and Scotland for other non-white populations, e.g. 42% of black Caribbean families in Britain are headed by a lone parent, compared to 29% of black Caribbean families in Scotland, i.e. non-white families are less likely to be headed by a lone parent in Strathclyde. Further insight is provided by considering the position of ethnic group according to the prevalence of lone parenthood across these geographical areas. It is found that their 'rank' is consistent within each geographical area. For example, black Caribbean families are more likely than Indian families to be headed by a lone parent in Strathclyde, Scotland and Britain. Thus, while the number of non-white lone parent families and the incidence of lone parent families distinguishes Scotland from the remainder of Britain, the relative 'rank' of ethnic groups (ordered according to the proportion of lone parents) is identical across different geographical areas.

Finally, the type of housing unit in which lone parents reside also varies geographically. Strathclyde lone parents are more likely to reside in flats and are less likely to reside in detached, semi-detached or terraced houses (part d). This aggregate experience also holds for lone parents in Scotland, compared to those from the rest of Britain. Clearly, if it can be demonstrated that the nature of the residential environment is a contributory factor to a lone parent's QoL, then it should be expected that the QoL of lone parents from Strathclyde will differ from the QoL of lone parents from other parts of Britain. However, such findings should not detract from the overall conclusion that lone parents in Strathclyde are broadly similar to those in other parts of Britain.

5.3.2 VARIATIONS WITHIN STRATHCLYDE : DISTRICT COUNCILS

The same set of indicators from 5.3.1 were used to compare the character of lone parents from different districts within Strathclyde Region (Table 5.4). Unlike the region-nation analysis, considerable variations are evident between lone parents from different districts. Gender

Table 5.4 - Lone Parent Characteristics
: Lone Parent Heads Of Household With Children Under 16 In The District Council Areas Of Strathclyde

	DISTRICT COUNCIL AREAS																		
	Ewood		EastK		SKelv		A & B		Cumng		Monkl		Dumtn		Inver		Renfw		GLAS
	B & M		K & C		C & K		ClyDL		K & L		C & DV		Mwell		Hamlt		ClyBK		
a) SEX																			
% Women Lone Parents	92.5	93.0	92.5	93.8	93.1	92.4	89.1	90.0	93.1	94.5	93.2	92.7	93.7	92.9	94.2	93.4	93.6	95.1	93.2
b) SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP																			
Prof/Managerial	20	12	16	10	8	9	10	9	5	9	6	14	9	4	6	10	9	8	8
Clerical	20	26	19	16	31	23	19	21	15	18	18	11	12	16	10	11	12	16	14
Skilled Non-Manual	40	38	32	28	31	46	19	27	24	11	25	14	22	30	28	36	31	38	30
Skilled Manual	--	3	9	--	1	4	9	9	9	16	13	9	11	11	7	9	8	5	7
Semi-Skilled Manual	7	18	14	25	17	18	18	25	34	38	25	43	24	24	36	20	26	11	22
Unskilled Manual	5	3	8	17	9	--	9	7	11	6	13	6	15	12	11	11	12	19	17
Others	9	--	3	3	4	--	15	2	1	2	1	3	6	3	2	2	2	3	3
c) ECONOMIC ACTIVITY																			
(MEN) Full-Time	61	82	71	66	67	56	55	62	51	56	49	44	60	49	42	55	62	68	41
Part-Time	--	--	4	3	2	--	8	2	6	4	4	9	0	6	8	3	4	6	5
Self-Employed	32	12	10	16	8	16	30	15	11	5	10	22	16	9	8	11	7	8	5
Other	7	6	15	15	23	28	7	13	32	35	37	29	34	36	42	31	27	23	49
(WOMEN) Full-Time	43	43	43	35	47	48	34	43	35	39	38	35	37	42	34	45	39	39	33
Part-Time	38	40	40	45	38	42	50	43	45	41	33	39	38	37	39	30	36	38	35
Self-Employed	9	2	2	3	2	3	5	3	2	2	1	3	4	2	2	3	2	2	2
Other	10	15	15	17	13	7	12	11	18	18	28	23	21	19	35	22	23	21	30
d) HOUSEHOLD SPACE																			
Detached	17	19	3	7	7	3	13	12	4	3	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	1	**
Semi-Detached	31	35	8	16	23	4	18	14	17	22	8	20	8	8	9	14	7	4	3
Terraced	27	26	44	27	19	38	23	46	49	31	25	46	21	36	15	43	16	9	7
Flat	24	20	43	47	51	55	39	28	28	42	65	31	66	53	73	39	75	86	89
Other	1	**	2	3	**	**	7	**	2	2	**	1	1	1	1	**	**	**	1
e) MIGRATION																			
Migrate < 1 year	14.1	11.0	19.8	17.4	14.1	18.6	19.1	13.6	15.1	18.7	14.1	16.2	14.9	15.5	17.2	13.4	17.2	18.4	16.7

Source : Registrar General Scotland (1993a, Tables 40 & 59) and (1993b, Table 86)
Notes : 1 - Defined as 'lacking or sharing the use of a bath/shower and/or inside toilet and/or no central heating'.
2 - Defined as 'the number of (lone parent) households containing persons with limiting long-term illness'.
* - District councils are ordered by rank, with the most favourable lone parent conditions found higher up the table. The rank represents the mean ratio for six dimensions, i.e. excluding gender divisions for economic activity levels. The mean ratios, in descending order are 43, 44, 62, 70, 72, 74, 74, 75, 82, 83, 86, 93, 94, 95, 96, 101, 103, 105, 118.

composition is the only exception, i.e. the ratio of women:men lone parent households is very similar across the districts with around fifteen women for each man (part a).

Migration rates (the proportion who migrated within the last year) vary from one-tenth to one-fifth of the lone parent household population at the district level. Bearsden & Milngavie, one of the most affluent areas within the region, experienced the lowest rate of migration. Taking this result at face value, would suggest that lone parents are less likely to move to affluent areas. Such a finding is consistent with the knowledge that lone parent households are among the poorer groups in society, i.e. they do not have the financial resources that would be necessary to gain access to and/or meet the cost of living in these areas. This raises the broader issue of lone parent migration; a key issue, as the implications of lone parent migration extend far beyond financial matters. However, it is premature to reach the conclusion that there is a relatively lower migration rate to affluent areas. First, there are several exceptions to this general rule, e.g. Hamilton, one of the least affluent areas, has a slightly lower migration rate than that of Eastwood, the most affluent district. Second, and more importantly, conclusions cannot be drawn because the data is incomplete, i.e. an aggregate migration rate does not provide information on its component parts, i.e. out-migration (where a migrant leaves the district to go elsewhere), in-migration (where a migrant enters the district from elsewhere) and within area migration (where a migrant moves from another part of the district). A comprehensive appraisal of lone parent migration is undertaken within chapter ten. At the present time, the key point is that migration behaviour is a source of difference between lone parents in different districts.

Marked variations in the type of housing occupied is also apparent (part d). At one extreme, nine-tenths of lone parents in Glasgow and Clydebank live in flats, with less than one-in-twenty in detached or semi-detached houses. In contrast, less than one-quarter of lone parents in Eastwood and Bearsden & Milngavie live in flats and one in every two live in a detached house or semi-detached house. With such a high proportion of lone parent housing being provided by the public sector, the nature of the public housing stock will play a large part in determining the type of house in which lone parents reside.

Finally, the census data facilitates comparison among the working lone parent population. For both men and women, significantly higher proportions of workers in Inverclyde and Glasgow are employed on an irregular basis, i.e. neither full-time nor part-time. Men and women in Eastwood and men in Argyll & Bute are much more likely to be self-employed. For women, the ratio of part-

time/full-time workers is comparable across the districts, although in Cunninghame, Kilmarnock & Loudoun and Argyll & Bute there is a higher proportion of part-time workers, and in Strathkelvin there is a higher proportion of full-time workers. However, it cannot be deduced whether the labour market variations reflect geographical factors (the opportunities available within the local labour market) or familial factors (the differences in working opportunities between lone parent households and adults from other households). This is another aspect of lone parenthood which is worthy of attention, but beyond the scope of this thesis. Should such a project find evidence of familial variations, then the extent to which this is attributable to employers' decision-making, environmental constraints or lone parent choice must be gauged.

In general, the character of the lone parent population varies by district. In particular, those from affluent districts are likely to differ to those from poorer areas (compare Eastwood and Glasgow). However, beyond this geographical observation, there are geographical specificities that contribute toward the geographical variations in lone parent experiences. Thus, for example, lone parents in Glasgow and Clydebank are overwhelmingly more likely to live in flats (more than four out of every five lone parents). A significantly higher proportion of lone parents in Cumnock & Doon Valley are employed in a professional/managerial capacity. It is as important to understand these specificties as it is to comprehend the generalities. Unfortunately, this contribution to knowledge must be pursued beyond the thesis.

5.3.3 VARIATIONS WITHIN STRATHCLYDE : AREAS FOR PRIORITY TREATMENT

The final stage in the review of the geography of lone parent characteristics compares lone parents from deprivation areas in Strathclyde (Areas For Priority Treatment [hereafter, APT]), to those who do not live within areas characterised by deprivation. The research question is posed thus: Are lone parents from more deprived areas, different to those from outside these areas? Each respondent to the LPQoL Questionnaire was categorised according to whether or not they lived within an APT area. Table 5.5 outlines the significant differences between lone parents from APT and those from outside these areas.

As would be expected, lone parents from deprived areas are more likely to be disadvantaged, i.e. they are more likely to:

1) be economically inactive (part b)
2) have lower levels of educational attainment & participation (parts c & d)
3) be living in rented accommodation (part e)

This is not to suggest that lone parents who do not live in areas of deprivation are socio-economically advantaged; rather, the majority of such lone parents share the same general disadvantaged profile as those from the APT. Thus, differences are a matter of degree, i.e. lone parents from deprived areas are *even more* disadvantaged than those lone parents from outside these

Table 5.5
Lone Parent Characteristics By Areas Of Deprivation

PERCENTAGE OF SURVEY POPULATION BY DEPRIVATION STATUS OF EACH TYPE				
VARIABLE	Variate	IN APT		NOT IN APT
(A)	B	C	D	E F
a) STATUS				
	Divorced	52.8 (38)		73.6 (106)
	Separated/Never Married	47.2 (34)		26.4 (38)
Chi-Square : 8.46094	d.f : 1	Significance : 0.0036		Cases : 216
b) WORK STATUS				
	Economically Active	17.3 (13)		39.4 (61)
	Inactive	82.7 (62)		60.0 (94)
Chi-Square : 10.24557	d.f : 1	Significance : 0.0014		Cases : 230
c) EDUCATION PARTICIPATION				
	Early Leaver	87.7 (64)		70.4 (100)
	Later Leaver	12.3 (9)		29.6 (42)
Chi-Square : 7.00310	d.f : 1	Significance : 0.0081		Cases : 215
d) EDUCATION ATTAINMENT				
	High Attainment	8.6 (6)		24.6 (35)
	Low Attainment	91.4 (64)		75.2 (107)
Chi-Square : 6.77185	d.f : 1	Significance : 0.0093		Cases : 212
e) HOUSING TENURE				
	Owner	1.5 (1)		20.0 (28)
	Renter	98.5 (67)		80.0 (112)
Chi-Square : 11.59823	d.f : 1	Significance : 0.0007		Cases : 208
f) CHILDCARE PROVIDED BY LOCAL COUNCIL				
	Yes	31.1 (24)		18.1 (28)
	No	68.9 (50)		81.9 (127)
Chi-Square : 5.10109	d.f : 1	Significance : 0.0239		Cases : 229
g) MIGRATE INTO LONE PARENTHOOD				
	No	69.9 (51)		52.7 (77)
	Yes	30.1 (22)		47.3 (69)
Chi-Square : 5.19157	d.f : 1	Significance : 0.0227		Cases : 219
h) LONE PARENT SUPPORT GROUP MEMBER				
	Yes	59.5 (44)		40.5 (30)
	No	23.2 (36)		76.8 (119)
Chi-Square : 27.35779	d.f : 1	Significance : 0.0000		Cases : 229
i) TYPE OF SUPPORT GROUP ATTENDED				
	One-Plus	57.9 (11)		42.1 (8)
	Gingerbread	23.1 (6)		76.9 (20)
Chi-Square : 4.27721	d.f : 1	Significance : 0.0386		Cases : 45

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)
Notes : APT - Areas for Priority Treatment
: Cases in parenthesis

areas. Difference is not restricted to socio-economic status; rather, differences are also evident in terms of previous marital status (lone parents from APT are more likely to be separated or never married), childcare (lone parents from APT are more likely to receive childcare support from the Local Authority), migration behaviour (lone parents from APT are more likely to have moved house to become a lone parent) and lone parent support group involvement (lone parents from APT are more likely to be members of such a group).

What is the significance of these results? Clearly, the concentration of separated and single lone parents in areas of deprivation is important. These lone parents are less likely to maintain contact with ex-partners and thus, the pattern of family life in areas of deprivation will differ significantly to that prevalent outside these areas. Second, lone parents in APT are *less* likely to have moved house to become a lone parent. Thus, these areas of high lone parent concentration owe more to the processes of family formation within the area, than to migration from outside. This will be examined in more depth in chapter ten. Finally, the results also suggest that lone parents in APT are *better* placed to receive institutional support. This is evident for support from the public sector (more lone parents from APT utilised childcare facilities provided by the local council) and from the voluntary sector (more lone parents from APT were members of a lone parent support group). Thus, it is important not to dismiss these areas as unsuitable for lone parents. In ways that are important to a significant proportion of the lone parent population, these areas actually offer more of the services that they need.

To summarise, there are differences between those lone parents who reside in areas of deprivation and those who do not. Whilst those who live outside deprivation areas are most advantaged on socio-economic grounds, those within deprivation areas benefit from more institutional support. Thus, a key issue to be addressed later in the thesis is whether the higher levels of institutional support available to those in APT can compensate for socio-economic disadvantage in terms of QoL.

5.4 BEYOND PROFILE CHARACTERISTICS

Having examined how lone parents differ from partnered parents (5.2) and how lone parents vary across space (5.3), the character of the lone parent population is examined in more detail. The focus is exclusively lone parent and no attempt is made to develop the comparative basis of the previous two sections. Furthering an understanding of lone parents' socio-economic, familial/demographic and lone parent-related characteristics are the object of analysis. Using the LPQoL questionnaire survey results, this is approached in three ways:

1) *Description Beyond Basic Profile Characteristics*:
   For example, for education, the amount of participation and the juxtaposition of education and lone parent status are considered, in addition to reporting the highest level of attainment..
2) *Inter-relationships Between Profile Characteristics of the Same Dimension*:
   For example, for employment, the relationship between hours worked and days worked (per week) was examined to establish a fuller understanding of lone parent's typical working week.
3) *Typology Based on Inter-Relationships Between Key Profile Characteristics of Each Type*
   For example, employment rates, tenure, educational attainment and transportation dependency were used to devise a socio-economic typology of lone parents.

5.4.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

5.4.1a Nature Of Employment

It is important to remember that almost 45% of the sample were not in employment (Table 4.7). A further 17% of the respondents did not answer the question on employment status. Thus, this section refers to less than 40% of the sample population. Furthermore, a significant minority (15%) of the economically inactive lone parents surveyed are 'active' in other senses (in addition to childrearing and homemaking). Six per cent of the economically inactive are employed on a voluntary basis and nine per cent are in full-time education. Such activity is an important factor to consider in lone parent employment debates, although it is not significant in the discussion that follow.

EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS: Employment *per se* is an important determinant of life chances. However, the nature of employment is often overlooked (except in terms of hours worked per week or occupation status); the security of employment of the working lone parents surveyed is now discussed. Three-quarters are employed in permanent positions. Of the remainder, half were employed on a temporary basis and half were casual workers. By definition, temporary employment offers a short-term solution to employment aspirations, although it is often an important first step on

the employment ladder. The role of casual employment is less readily apparent; if lone parents are in the position to choose when they want to work, casual employment may be advantageous. However, if casual employment implies that lone parents must work when contracts become available/absenteeism must be covered, it may present lone parents with difficulties, e.g. arranging childcare at short notice. Nevertheless, the 'security' of most working lone parents (i.e. those in permanent positions) is a positive feature of lone parents' work experience; insecurities are faced by a minority of the survey sample of working lone parents.

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS - BEYOND UNIVARIATE STATISTICS: What is the nature of the typical working week for lone parents? As would be expected, in general, the more hours worked per week, the more days are worked (Table 5.6a). However, significant proportions of working lone parents are committed for most days of the week, while working only part-time hours; indeed, of the part-time workers surveyed, almost half are working for at least five days of the week. While such arrangements may be convenient for working lone parents, e.g. weekday working within school hours, it is nevertheless the case that such arrangements place considerable time pressures upon workers; the ration of *unpaid* working time (travel etc.) to *paid* working time, is understandably low for these workers.

A related issue concerns the quality of part-time work. This is explored by comparing details of social class based on occupation to length of working week (Table 5.6). The findings can be summarised thus: the higher the social class, the greater the likelihood that a fuller working week is experienced. The distinction between the lowest social class and the other social classes is particularly acute; while a clear majority of lone parents in professional occupations work a five day/full time working week (62%), only one half of intermediate workers do so (53%), as do just one third of manual workers (36%). Furthermore, the nature of those occupations with the shortest hours/longest days appear to be concentrated at the 'lower end' of the labour market, e.g. 41% of manual employees surveyed experience such a working week, compared to only 3% of professional employees of lone parents surveyed.

Finally, social class is compared to employment status; those whose occupations suggest they are of a lower social class are also more likely to be in non-permanent employment (Table 5.6c). Once again, cleavages among the working lone parent population are evident; attention should be paid to whether the employed/unemployed distinction is more significant than the differences among workers in explaining variations in QoL.

5.4.1b Income

Two aspects of lone parents' income are considered in this section; their general economic status and maintenance as a source of income.

ECONOMIC STATUS AND INCOME: The Department Of Social Security (hereafter, D.S.S.) was the main provider of income for two-thirds of the survey respondents. With one quarter

Table 5.6
Nature of Lone Parents' Employment Experience

PERCENTAGE OF WORKING LONE PARENT SURVEY POPULATION

A) WORKING WEEK : HOURS BY DAYS

HOURS WORKED	DAYS WORKED: 2 or less	2½ to 4½	5	>5
Part-Time (<24 hr/wk)	12.9	7.5	16.1	2.1
Full-Time (24+ hr/wk)	--	7.5	50.5	2.1

B) SOCIAL CLASS BY WORKING WEEK (PROPORTIONS FOR EACH SOCIAL CLASS)

SOCIAL CLASS[1] BY HOURS WORKED	DAYS WORKED: 2 or less	2½ to 4½	5	>5
Prof. & Part-Time	14	3	3	--
Prof. & Full-Time	--	10	62	7
Inter. & Part-Time	17	8	8	3
Inter. & Full-Time	--	6	53	6
Manual. & Part-Time	9	9	41	--
Manual. & Full-Time	--	5	36	--

C) SOCIAL CLASS BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS (PROPORTIONS FOR EACH CLASS)

SOCIAL CLASS BASED ON EMPLOYMENT	EMPLOYMENT STATUS: Permanent	Temporary
Professional/Managerial	82.1	17.9
Skilled	82.9	17.1
Partly Skilled/Unskilled	59.1	40.9

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)

Notes : No statistical summaries are given as there were more than 20% of ceels in each table with an E.F. of less than 5. Caution is therefore to be urged when drawing inferences from these results.

providing most of their own income, virtually no lone parents relied on maintenance as their main source of income is maintenance, i.e. only 9 lone parents or 3% of the survey population.

Table 5.7 summarises the working and earning experiences of lone parents. Clearly, the majority of the lone parent population are either *fully* integrated within the labour market (30%), or are completely outside it (51%). However, it is worth noting that one fifth of parents do not conform to either of these basic stereotypes; interpreting the working experience of lone parents is not entirely straightforward. Column b shows that a significant proportion of workers rely on the D.S.S. for their main source of income. Thus, the wage earned by a significant proportion of the working lone

Table 5.7
Lone Parents' Economic Status
: A Multivariate Typology

MAIN SOURCE OF INCOME	WORK STATUS	ECONOMIC STATUS	PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENTS SURVEYED	
A	B	C	D[1]	E[2]
D.S.S.	Non-Worker	Economically Inactive	51.3	56.0
Earner	Worker	Economically Active	30.6	26.5
D.S.S.	Worker	Economically Active	6.1	6.2
D.S.S.	Worker	Economically Inactive	5.7	4.7
Maintenance	Non-Worker	Economically Inactive	3.8	2.2
Maintenance	Worker	Economically Active	1.3	1.1
		Inconsistent	1.7	3.3
		Missing	[16.4]	---
		CASES	230	275

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)

Notes : 1 - Proportions refer to those who responsed to each question.
2 - Proportions refer to those who responsed to at least two of the three questions.
DSS - Department of Social Security

parent population is a subsidiary source of income. This finding is consistent with the results reported earlier that a significant proportion of lone parent workers are employed on a part-time basis (5.3.1). A second conclusion to draw from these results is that a significant minority of recipients of D.S.S. support perform a work role.

MAINTENANCE: The 'supplementary' nature of maintenance income is readily apparent from the survey results; 18% of the respondents receive maintenance; five-sixths of these have an alternative source that provides more income. This is further emphasised when the average level of maintenance payment is considered. On average, maintenance accounted for less than £8 of the weekly income of those respondents who received it.

As revealing as the *level* of maintenance payment, are the attitudes toward maintenance held by lone parents. This is particularly important given the changes initiated by the Government through the Child Support Agency (C.S.A.) - see 2.4.2. More than half of the lone parents surveyed would reveal the whereabouts of their ex partner if the D.S.S. asked them to. Only one-fifth objected to the idea and wouldn't reveal their partner's whereabouts. Additionally, one-quarter couldn't reveal their partner's whereabouts. Thus, while the majority of lone parents did not object to the principle of revealing their ex-partner's whereabouts (more would than wouldn't), only half of the lone parents

would be able to do so in practice (the remainder either couldn't or wouldn't supply such information).

At the time of the survey, two-fifths had been through a D.S.S. interview that raised the issue of maintenance. One-tenth of these reported a change in their maintenance payments as a result of this interview. Conversely, forty per cent noted that the interview did not, and would not, result in a change to their income balance. For the remainder, the survey was conducted before the D.S.S. had informed them of the interview outcome. Thus, the D.S.S. were not generally successful in increasing the level of maintenance payment to lone parents; four out of every five respondents who reported a conclusive outcome to their D.S.S. interview recorded no change to their income balance.

The income status of lone parents is currently in a state of flux as the Government attempts to ensure that maintenance provides for a greater share of lone parent's income. The survey results forewarned of the difficulties the C.S.A. would face as the objective of increasing the role of maintenance in supporting lone parents has been less successful than the Government anticipated. For the foreseeable future at least, the D.S.S. will remain the major provider of income for lone parents.

5.4.1c Nature Of Post-School Education Experience

EDUCATION AND LONE PARENT STATUS: Within a broader study of lone parenthood, it is important to consider the relationship between education and the lone parent life course. Most post-compulsory education was undertaken prior to becoming a lone parent; 60% had finished with education prior to lone parenthood. Of the others, 8% had commenced education prior to lone parenthood and had sustained this commitment as their status changed, 6% returned to a further programme of education after changing status, while the remaining 26% commenced education for the first time after becoming a lone parent. A significant proportion of lone parents who have experienced post-compulsory education do so when they become a lone parent. Clearly, there are many lone parents who are seeking to better their lot. This level of educational participation can also be explained in terms of the fiscal penalties incurred when a low amount of extra income is earned; education offers the potential to compete for higher wages within the labour market. indeed, the significance of the proportion who undertake education as a lone parent becomes even more apparent when it is acknowledged that the vast majority of lone parents have only been lone parents for a few years (Table 4.7).

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE - BEYOND UNIVARIATE STATISTICS : The majority of lone parents provided details of their school leaving age, the number of years spent in education beyond school and their highest level of educational attainment (223 cases or 81% of the survey population). A further 12% (33 cases) provided an incomplete record. Together, these responses provide the basis for a more detailed account of lone parents' educational experience.

As Table 5.8 demonstrates, the majority of the lone parent population (almost 60%) left school at the earliest opportunity, did not undertake any education after school and (consequently) have not

Table 5.8
Lone Parents' Educational Experience
: A Multivariate Typology

PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT SURVEY POPULATION (COMPLETE PROFILES)			
SCHOOL LEAVING[1] AGE	YEARS IN EDUCATION BEYOND SCHOOL	HIGHEST LEVEL[2] ATTAINMENT	
A	B	C	D
A) POLAR TYPES : COMPLETE			
Earliest Opportunity	none	below census level	57.8
Stay On	2 or more	census level	9.4
B) OTHER COMPLETE PROFILES			
Stay On	none	below census level	10.3
Earliest Opportunity	1 year	below census level	9.4
Earliest Opportunity	2 or more	census level	5.8
Earliest Opportunity	2 or more	below census level	3.1
Stay On	1 year	below census level	2.7
Stay On	2 or more	below census level	1.3
C) OTHER RESPONDENTS (CASES)			
Inconsistent Responses	3		
Missing All Information	16		
Incomplete Profiles	33		

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)
Cases : 225
Notes : 1 - Definition of School Leaving Age
i) At earliest opportunity = 15 or 16
ii) Stay On = at least 17
2 - Definition of Educational Attainment
i) Census Level = a qualification that would be registered on a British census form, i.e. at least diploma level

attained the diploma level of education. This broader insight, based on the aggregate lone parent population and not only the *educated* lone parent population, stress that it is important not to over-emphasise the utility of education, as could be inferred from previous results. Indeed, the educated profile (those who stayed on at school beyond the minimum school leaving age and who undertook at least two years of education beyond school, culminating in a qualification of at least the diploma standard) is but one of three subsidiary sub-groups of lone parent, each of which account for c10% of lone parents; later school leavers with low educational experience beyond school & no educational attainment, and early school leavers with one year of educational experience beyond school & low educational attainment are the others. Although some lone parents left school at the earliest

Table 5.9
Lone Parents' Housing Status : Tenure by Tenancy

PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENTS SURVEYED BY HOUSING TENURE		
A	B	C
	HOUSING TENANCY	
HOUSING TENURE	Shared	Not Sharing
In Owner-Occupied Accommodation	25.8	74.2
In Rented Accommodation	8.6	91.4

Chi-Square: 6.77185 d.f: 1 **Significance:** 0.0093 **Cases:** 193

Source : LPQoL Questionnaire (main version)
Notes : 'Housing tenure' refers to the property itself; this is not to imply that lone parents in owner-occupied accommodation are themselves owners. Rather, they may be lodging with the owners (for example, with parents [see text for details]).

opportunity, then proceeded to post compulsory education beyond school, going on to reach the highest level of educational attainment (6%), the most important conclusion is that lone parents' educational standing is consistent across the various indicators.

Potentially, some of the most interesting research questions on lone parents' educational experience relates to the timing of education relative to lone parent status. Unfortunately, the limited number of highly educated survey respondents prevents any definitive conclusion being reached. Education and lone parenthood is an issue worthy of closer attention in future research.

5.4.1d Transportation And Housing

Respondents were asked which modes of transportation they would use if they were shopping for household provisions and for clothes. These represented 'local' means of transportation and 'distant' means of transportation respectively. For both local and distant journeys, lone parents were primarily dependent on public forms of transport, although more of the distant journeys were taken by public transportation; 70% as against 55% for local journeys. However, the private sphere does not equate with self provision of transportation; for example, 'private' could involve travel in a friend's or relative's car. Indeed, this basis of comparison shows lone parents to be less independent than before, i.e. a significant proportion of lone parents rely on others' private means of transportation; 15% for local journeys, and more than 25% for distant journeys.

Housing profiles are most commonly described in terms of tenure. However, for lone parents, it is worth drawing attention to the inter-relationship between housing tenure and tenancy (Table 5.9). Significantly, lone parents who reside in owner-occupied accommodation are more likely to be sharing than those in rented accommodation. This is further evidence of the weaker position of lone

parents in the private housing market; one-quarter of (an already low proportion of) lone parents in owner-occupied accommodation are not actually owner-occupiers. However, it is also suggestive of possible advantages in sharing accommodation, i.e. those who share are more likely to experience a better standard of accommodation (given that private houses in general, are in a better state of repair than rented accommodation).

5.4.1e A Socio-Economic Typology

Disadvantage has been a recurrent theme in the preceding discussion of lone parents' socio-economic status. It was also shown how socio-economic profiles are generally similar for each socio-economic condition, e.g. for education, *early* school leavers with *no* education beyond school and *lower* levels of educational achievement was the modal group. This section concludes by considering the extent to which socio-economic profiles are consistent across socio-economic conditions; economic activity levels (employment), tenure (housing), transport self-provision (transport) and levels of educational achievement (education) are used as the basis for discussion.

There is evidence that those with socio-economic (dis)advantage in one dimension are more likely to exhibit socio-economic (dis)advantage in another, i.e. two-fifths of lone parents exhibit exclusively advantageous (6%) or disadvantageous (33%) socio-economic profiles (Table 5.10). However, there is greater evidence of complex profiles at this multi-component level of synthesis; 18% of lone parents have an equal number of positive/negative conditions (Table 5.10). The upper half of Table 5.10 considers only those who responded to each socio-economic question. From here it can be seen that, two socio-economic profiles are also prevalent among the lone parent population:

1) 29.8% - Economically Inactive : Renting : Low Education Attainment : Dependent For Transport
2) 14.1% - Economically Inactive : Renting : Low Education Attainment Self-Provider Of Transport

For the QoL analysis, this complexity means that it is not advisable to replace each socio-economic component with an socio-economic index in attempting to explain QoL; rather, the effort must be made to explain which particular socio-economic factors are most closely associated with the QoL outcomes. However, this complexity should not detract from the key empirical conclusion of this multivariate analysis, i.e. that most lone parents experience more socio-economic disadvantages than advantages (63.5%).

Table 5.10
Lone Parents : A Multivariate Socio-Economic Typology

			PERCENTAGE OF LONE SURVEY PARENT POPULATION	
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY	HOUSING TENURE	TRANSPORT DEPENDENCY	EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	
A	B	C	D	E
A) SPECIFIC PROFILES				
Active	Owner	Not dependent	Census level	7.3
Inactive	Renter	Dependent	below cen. level	34.6
Inactive	Renter	Not dependent	below cen. level	29.8
Active	Renter	Not dependent	below cen. level	14.1
Active	Renter	Dependent	below cen. level	8.9
Active	Owner	Not dependent	below cen. level	5.2
			CASES :	191
B) GENERAL SUMMARY				
Exclusively socio-economic advantage			5.9	|
Mainly socio-economic advantage (by 2)			7.0	|- 15.5
Mainly socio-economic advantage (by 1)			2.6	|
Equally disadvantaged/advantaged			17.8	-- 17.8
Mainly socio-economically disadvantaged (by 1)			3.3	|
Mainly socio-economically disadvantaged (by 2)			31.0	|- 66.8
Exclusively socio-economically disadvantaged			32.5	|
			CASES :	275

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)
Cases : Part 'a' refers only to lone parents from the main version of the LPQoL questionnaire who provided a complete socio-economic profile. Part 'b' classified all respondents (main & pilot) on the basis of what information they provided.
Notes : Definition of Economic Activity
a) Active = Economically Active
b) Inactive = Economically Inactive
: Definition of Transport Dependency
a) Dependent = do not provide the majority of own transportation needs.
b) Non-Dependent = as above, but can provide
: Definition of Education Status
a) Census Level = holds a qualification that would be registered on a British census form, i.e. at least diploma level
: Definition of Socio-Economic Advantage
a) 'by 2' = Where the lone parent has two more advantages (e.g. economically active, owner-occupier, not dependent for transport, education to diploma level) than disadvantages (e.g. economically inactive, renter, dependent for transport, not educated to diploma level)
b) 'by 1' = As above with one more advantage

5.4.2 LONE PARENT FAMILIES

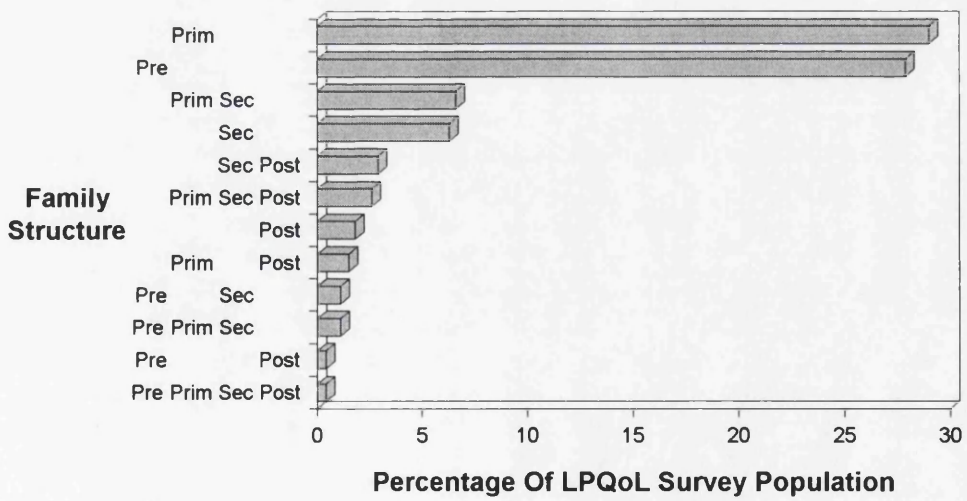
The questionnaire asked of the ages of all the children within the lone parent family. Each child was classed as belonging to one of four child-development stages, i.e. pre-school, primary school age, secondary school age or beyond school age.

5.4.2a Family Structure

There is greater variation among lone parents in terms of their family structure; 41 combinations of children (as defined by the four child development stages) were generated from 272 valid survey responses. As Figure 5.1 demonstrates, four child-structures are particularly prevalent, i.e. lone child under five, lone child of primary school age, two children (one pre-school & one primary school age) and two children of primary school age.

Figure 5.1

Family Structure : Lone Parents In Strathclyde



Source: LPQoL Questionnaire (pilot & main versions)

Legend: Pre - Pre-school age Prim - Primary school age
Sec - Secondary (Senior) schools Post - Beyond school age

These combinations are based upon each *individual child. Child development stage* is an alternative basis for comparison. An example can be used to clarify this distinction. Take two families, one a lone child family (one child under 5) and the other a two-child family (two children under 5). If classification is based upon each individual child, then these are classified separately (one child of pre-school age and two children of pre-school age respectively). If classification is based upon child development stage, both would be classified within the 'families of pre-school age children only' category. Under the child-development stage classification, three-tenths of lone parent families consist only of primary school age children and three-tenths consist only of pre-school age children. A third structure, pre-school and primary school age children, accounts for one-fifth of families. Both bases of comparison emphasise that lone parent families tend to comprise of young dependent children.

One final descriptive aspect of family structure is considered: the extent to which children in lone parent families have 'peers' (brothers and/or sisters of a similar age) within their family. The importance of this is difficult to estimate. On one hand, this may be a potential benefit, providing the lone parent with the opportunity to budget on economies of scale (such as the purchase of weekly groceries) and the opportunities for sharing and recycling of goods among the family members (toys, clothing etc.). However, this could be a source of tension within the household unit and could increase the strain on the lone parent. Either way this is potentially a significant aspect of family life.

The majority of lone parent households do not have children of the same child development stage (62%). This reflects the prevalence of the lone child/lone parent family (44%). Even when these one child families are removed from the analysis, it is found that only 31.1% of lone parent families with more than one child do not contain children of the same child development stage. Thus, whatever the impact of peer presence, it is not particularly prevalent among the lone parent population.

5.4.2b Implications Of Family Structure

The previous section concluded by suggesting that the structure of the lone parent family has an impact on family life. While not wishing to appear deterministic, this is a reasonable assumption to make, i.e. that children of the same age band share similar characteristics, but that these differ to those of children from other age bands. On this understanding, some further implications of family structure are now discussed.

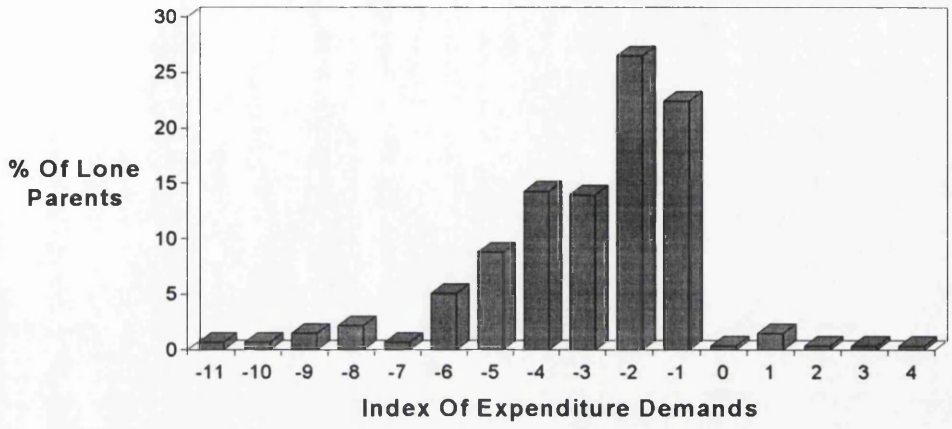
EXPENDITURE DEMANDS: Different ages implies different levels of expenditure support. The D.S.S. recognise that the older the dependent child, the greater their expenditure requirements. The D.S.S. use this information to create an equivalence scale for family income; i.e. weighting bands for different age groups (Millar & Bradshaw 87).

In the thesis, an index of expenditure demand was devised based on the stages of child development referred to earlier. As with the D.S.S. scheme, older children require higher financial support. Additionally, an attempt was made to compensate for one limitation of the D.S.S. scheme, i.e. the

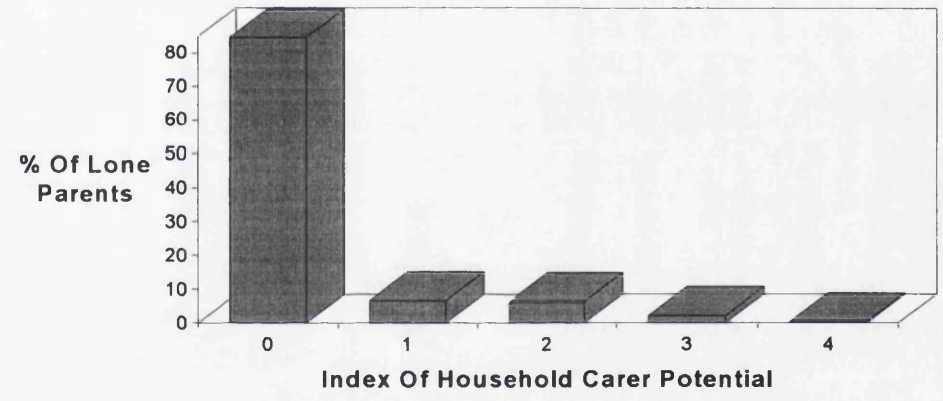
Figure 5.2

Lone Parents' Household Composition: Implications Of Family Structure

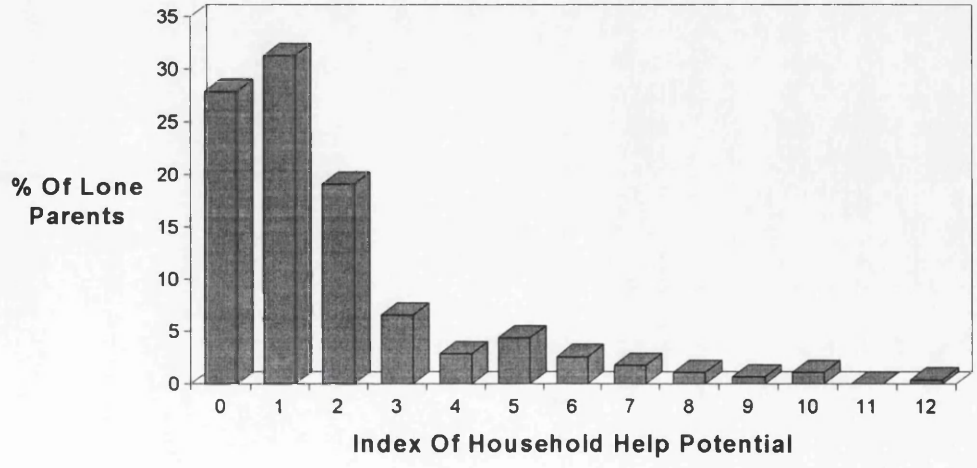
a) Expenditure Demands



b) Household Carer Potential



c) Household Help



exclusion from the calculations of non-dependent children who are resident within the household from the calculations. In theory, children beyond school age support themselves, via, for example, training scheme allowances, wages or welfare support. Thus, given that such children would have the potential (in theory) to contribute to the family income, these children were considered to provide financial support. Therefore, the weighting scheme used in the thesis to indicate expenditure demands is as follows; each pre-school (-1), each primary school (-2), each secondary school age (-3) and each post-school age child (+1).

Most expenditure support requirements are close to, but on the 'negative' side of neutral (Figure 5.2a). This reflects that most lone parent families are small and consist of younger children (hence low but negative expenditure rating). Only eight families have positive ratings (net income), i.e. 3% of the total. The minority of families who have a high negative rating, i.e. a high level of expenditure demands, are a subgroup whose QoL evaluations would be of particular interest.

HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT: An index of 'household labour potential' can be constructed on a similar basis. The rationale underlying this index follows thus: the older the child, the more able s/he is to contribute to household chores. As Kissman (91), and others, have argued, the support provided by children within the lone parent family is of much importance in making the lone parent unit more viable. In the index, pre-school children are considered unable to make a significant contribution to household chores. Among the older children, primary school age children make a small contribution (+1), with larger contributions made by secondary school age children (+2) and post-school age children (+3).

The results show that the vast majority of families offer minimal support for the lone parent, with 20% offering no support at all (Figure 5.2b). The minority of households with high levels of support (8% have more than 5 points) highlights an interesting subgroup whose importance should be considered at greater length, especially with respect to household matters. However, the key point is that (unlike partnered parents) lone parents are not able to draw upon their children for support around the household.

HOUSEHOLD CARER POTENTIAL: One final index that was devised is that of 'Household Carer Potential'. This refers to the number of older children (secondary age and beyond) in households with children of primary school age and pre-school age children. This index focuses on one aspect of household support, i.e. childcare. Childcare is the focus of much debate among researchers and welfare professionals concerned with lone parent issues. Yet this aspect of childcare, i.e. the potential of childcare support from within the lone parent family unit, is frequently overlooked. The vast majority of households with children aged eleven and under are without carers within the household unit (over 80% - see Figure 5.1). The childcare responsibilities of the lone parent are readily apparent.

Table 5.11
Lone Parents' Demographic Status : A Multivariate Typology

		PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT SURVEY POPULATION		
AGE	SEX	AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD	NUMBER OF CHILDREN	
A	B	C	D	E
30or over	Woman	No Pre-School Child	More than 2	20.6
30or over	Woman	No Pre-School Child	1 child	16.7
<30	Woman	Pre-School Child	1 child	15.5
<30	Woman	Pre-School Child	More than 2	13.9
30or over	Woman	Pre-School Child	More than 2	8.7
<30	Woman	No Pre-School Child	1 child	7.9
30or over	Woman	Pre-School Child	1 child	5.6
30or over	Man	No Pre-School Child	More than 2	4.4
			Other Profiles	6.7

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)

Notes : The data refers to all lone parents who provided a complete status profile; a further 6.7% of the survey population provided incomplete responses.

5.4.2c A Familial/Demographic Typology

Almost all survey respondents provided a complete demographic profile, i.e. 96% gave details of the number & ages of their children, their own age and their own sex. Bivariate analysis demonstrated that, the age and gender of the lone parent accounts for most of the variation; male lone parents were older, had fewer children and were less likely to have pre-school children than women and younger lone parents had fewer children and were more likely to have pre-school children than older parents. The associations between age & gender and age of parent & age of children are particularly significant. how then do these coincide in a multivariate typology? Two thirds of lone parents can be accounted by just four demographic profiles (Table 5.11), each of which is headed by a women:

1) 20.6% - Woman : 30+ : two children, neither of pre-school age
2) 16.7% - Woman : 30+ : one, not of pre-school age
3) 15.5% - Woman : <30 : one pre-school age
4) 13.9% - Woman : <30 : two children, including one of pre-school age

Clearly, it is erroneous to stereotype lone parents and their families. These four profiles are the most typical of the lone parent population but none of these represent even one-quarter of the total population. Most significantly, the image prevalent in the media of a young mother with pre-school child is only representative of one-sixth of the lone parent population.

5.4.3 ASPECTS OF LONE PARENTHOOD

5.4.3a Lone Parent Awareness

Not all lone parents identify themselves as such; this reflects the negative connotations that are associated with 'single parents' among society. The 'visibility' of lone parents has implications for policy interventions; research can identify areas of concern for lone parents, however, if sections of the target population do not identify themselves as such, the delivery of initiatives to tackle these problems is hindered. The questionnaire asked whether the respondent perceived themselves as a single parent and to specify their preferred descriptor if not. In response to the prompt, '*Do you think of yourself as a single parent?*', 81% responded positively. The follow up question, '*If not how would you describe yourself?*' produced 85 responses, including descriptions from some who perceived themselves as a lone parent (35) as well as those who did not (50). This open-ended question was interpreted in two ways. Almost half of the respondents provided a descriptive answer (e.g. 'a widow') and half provided an evaluative answer (e.g. happy [a positive response] or lonely [a negative response]); a small minority provided a response that was both descriptive and evaluative. Of the evaluative responses, 62% were of a positive nature and 30% were negative. Some of the descriptive alternatives provided variations of single parent, e.g. a widow or a lone parent. This positive self-portrayal is interesting, especially in light of the socio-economically disadvantages they experience (5.4.1). Once more, this is suggestive that lone parents' QoL is dictated by more than material circumstance. However, the key issue concerns the identity with status. While a majority of lone parents identify themselves as such, fully 20% refrain from such identification; the policy implications are readily apparent.

5.4.3b Lone Parent Status

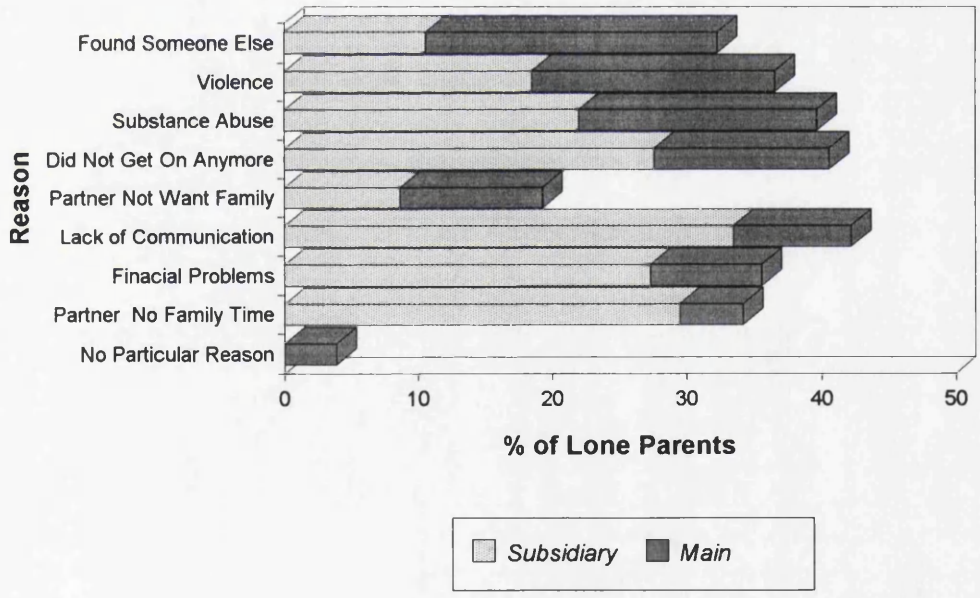
Lone parenthood is a process. As such, it is as important to consider the exit routes from lone parenthood as it is to consider the experience of, or the entry routes into lone parenthood. Respondents were asked of their attitude towards future partners. Only one-tenth of lone parents do not want another relationship with a partner. Thus, the overwhelming majority do not foresee their future as a lone parent. Fears among wider society of women 'abandoning' men seem largely unfounded. However, the most surprising aspect of this result is that lone parents still foresee a 'partnered' future, despite their previous experience; Figure 5.3 reports the reasons for relationship breakdown cited by the survey population.

A first point to note is the number of reasons given for relationship breakdown. On average, 2.9 reasons were given. This suggest that the decision to part company is not a straightforward matter. Rather, there are multiple factors which influenced this decision. Second, there is no single dominant

reason for relationship breakdown; seven separate reasons are each cited by between 11.9 and 14.6% of all lone parents surveyed (Figure 5.3). What may be surprising among the data is the high incidence of violence (a contributory factor in 37% of breakdowns), infidelity (a contributory factor in 32% of breakdowns) and substance abuse (a contributory factor in 40% of breakdowns). Such information challenges the logic of those policy-makers who seek to tackle "the problem" of lone parenthood by making it more difficult for partners to separate. Indeed, increasing the difficulty of lone parents to separate, could endanger the lives of the 37% who suffer violence and the 40% who suffer from the substance abuse of their partner. 'Blaming' lone parents for their condition is clearly too simplistic a conclusion to draw. Four additional reasons are also significant, i.e. financial problems, lack of talk, not getting on and the partner not willing to find time for the family. Once more, with more than one-third of lone parents reporting that the absent partner had no time for the family when they were together as a family unit, this challenges the logic that lone parent families suffer from the absence of the second parent is challenged.

Figure 5.3

Reasons For Relationship Breakdown



Source: LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)

Notes: Each lone parent was asked to state the main reason for separation and *all* subsidiary ones

LONE PARENT STATUS - A SYNTHESIS: Three dimensions of lone parent status were considered within the LPQoL questionnaire, i.e. status on the birth of their children, previous marital status, perceived status at the present time and preferred status in the future (Table 5.12). Two-thirds of the respondents provided a complete account of their lone parent status, i.e. 192 cases.

Table 5.12
Lone Parent Status : A Multivariate Typology

		PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT SURVEY POPULATION		
MARITAL STATUS	PERCEIVED STATUS	ANTICIPATED STATUS		
A	B	C	D	E
Single	Single Parent	Re-Partner	25.5	(22.3)
Separated	Single Parent	Re-Partner	22.9	(20.0)
Divorced	Single Parent	Re-Partner	21.9	(19.1)
Divorced	Not A Single Parent	Re-Partner	7.3	(6.4)
Divorced	Single Parent	Lone Parent	4.7	(4.1)
Separated	Not A Single Parent	Re-Partner	4.7	(4.1)
Single	Not A Single Parent	Re-Partner	4.7	(4.1)
Single	Single Parent	Lone Parent	4.2	(3.6)

Source : LPQoL Questionnaire (main version)

Cases : 192

Notes : Definition of Perceived Status
a) Single Parent = all those who considered themself to be a single parent.
: Definition of Anticipated Status
a) Lone Parent = all those with a child younger than 11 years old who did not anticipated re-partnering in five years time.
: Column 'd' expresses each status profile as a proportion of all lone parents who provided a complete status profile. Column 'e' expresses each status profile as a proportion of all lone parents

The bivariate relationships between these dimensions generate some interesting insights. First, comparing previous marital status and status at the birth of their children demonstrates the complexity of lone parent status; almost one quarter of those who have been divorced or separated were lone parents at the birth of their children. Whilst it is outside the remit of the survey database to assess whether separation preceded lone parenthood or whether both partnering and separation post-dated lone parenthood, it is clearly the case that the family history of lone parents is complex. Second, neither perceived status nor status at the birth of children is a useful predictor of preferred status in the future. Finally, among those aspects of status that are inter-related, the associations are weak. However, there does appear to be an increased likelihood that those lone parents who have been raising their children without a resident partner since the birth of their children are more likely to identify themselves as lone parents. In turn, divorcees were less likely than both separated and

single never-married lone parents to identify themselves as lone parents and yet were more likely than other lone parents to anticipate that they would remain lone parents in the future.

While there is no single dominant status profile among the lone parent survey population, there is clearly a majority of those who currently perceive themselves as a single parent, but who do not foresee themselves maintaining this status in the future (c60%); single, separated and divorced lone parents comprise an equal share of those with this outlook. The other general point that arises from this multivariate appraisal is that only one in twenty lone parents are 'single forever' (since birth, currently and [anticipated] in the future). Indeed, more divorced lone parents do *not* perceive themselves as a single parent and foresee that they will *not* be lone parents in the foreseeable future. Clearly, single parenthood is *not* seen to be the permanent condition for the majority of the lone parent population.

5.5 CONCLUSION

What are the key findings of this review of lone parents' characteristics? How do these inform the thesis' research agenda? First, *lone* parents were found to share a basically similar demographic profile as partnered parents, but to be markedly more socio-economically disadvantaged. Where geographical variation is controlled, these differences are less marked, but not obscured. Thus, lone parents differ from partnered parents in all bounded places (at different geographical scales); there are no areas in which lone parents share an equivalent socio-economic status with two parent families.

A second set of conclusions demonstrate that while lone parents' relative status is consistent across space, this does not imply that the type of lone parent in different places/spaces is similar. On the contrary, geographical variation in the type of lone parents are found at the regional, district and deprivation area basis of analysis. While the general finding was that the lone parent population is more socio-economically advantaged in areas of affluence, significant advantages of living in areas of deprivation were also identified.

Finally, the characteristics of the lone parent survey population were explored in more detail than is usually the case. A key insight was the complexity inherent in categorising the lone parent population; dominant stereotypes were found to be erroneous, or, at least, not as prevalent as commonly assumed. this also demonstrates that it is important to consider individual *components*. (e.g. tenure and education status), rather than the aggregate summation. Thus, the QoL explanations must be sought of in terms of univariate characteristics and not multivariate profiles. Finally, some research questions were generated by this review; these issues will be explored later as the thesis seeks to explain variation in the QoL experienced by lone parents.

CHAPTER SIX

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL QUALITY OF LIFE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter four, quality of life (hereafter, QoL) was conceptualised as comprising of an 'external' component and an 'internal' component (4.1.2b). In this chapter, the 'external' component is discussed at length and the 'internal' component is introduced (as the core concern of the thesis, this will be examined more fully in subsequent chapters). On the basis of these results, research issues for the thesis are generated (6.5.2) and conclusions are drawn as to the inter-relationship between the external and internal components of QoL for lone parents (6.5.1).

The 'external' measure of QoL is calculated using deprivation indicators from national survey data. Such indicators are widely used by academics and public policy-makers alike. Typical applications include the calculation of subsidies to General Practitioners whereby those working in more deprived areas receive more resources (Senior 91; Jarman 84) and the identification of locales in need of resource support (Bradford 93; Strathclyde Regional Council 92b). The deprivation indicators are from the 1991 Census of Population for Great Britain (hereafter G.B. census), i.e. overcrowding, housing amenity, employment status, car ownership, long-term illness and housing tenure.

The external QoL data (deprivation indicators) are applied to two ends. First, in section 6.2, they are used as a means to compare lone parents' QoL to that of other family and household types. Particular attention is paid to the differences between lone parent households and two parent (male & female) households. This estimates the QoL of lone parent households, relative to two parent [MF] households. Second, the differences between lone parents across space are considered. The analysis is conducted over two spatial scales, i.e. Strathclyde in a national context and variations within the District Council areas of Strathclyde. These estimate the geography of lone parents' QoL.

Thereafter, attention is focused upon the 'internal' component of QoL. Using data from the LPQoL questionnaires (pilot & main versions), three aspects of lone parents' QoL are discussed, i.e. their definition of what constitutes a high QoL, their evaluation of elements of their life and their evaluation of overall QoL at various times in their life. This basic QoL data is also used to calculate QoL indices at domain and overall level. Within this chapter, the general response patterns are the focus of attention; later chapters examine the nature of QoL (internal) in greater detail.

6.2 EXTERNAL QUALITY OF LIFE : LONE PARENTS IN BRITAIN

Do lone parent households experience a lower QoL than other households and family units?

Census statistics on aspects of deprivation are available for six household types without children: lone adult under pension age, lone adult of pension age, two adults of different sexes, two adults of same sex, at least three adults comprising at least one of each sex & at least three adults all of the same sex and also five household types with children: lone adult, two adults of different sexes, two adults of same sex and at least three adults all of the same sex (Table 6.1). The character of lone parent deprivation is first discussed (6.2.1a), before lone parent households are compared to all other households (6.2.1b). This involves a more focused comparative analysis, whereby lone parent households are compared to other *family* households and, in particular households comprising of two parent [MF] families.

6.2.1 ABSOLUTE DEPRIVATION : LONE PARENTS

Before discussing the relative standing of lone parents, it is useful to consider the level of deprivation actually experienced by this group; the proportion of lone parents experiencing deprivation is highlighted (underlined) in Table 6.1. The vast majority of lone parent households do not contain a family member who is suffering from a *limiting long-term illness* and virtually all lone parent households have adequate *space* for their needs. However, a substantial minority reside in accommodation that *lacks basic housing amenities* and the majority are *neither owner occupiers nor car owners*. Thus, there is a mixed outcome in terms of absolute deprivation

What do the results imply for the lives of lone parents? The finding that lone parents have adequate household space is somewhat misleading. First, the focus on lone parent *households*, excludes the cohort of lone parents who are most likely to experience overcrowding, i.e. concealed lone parent families who either share residence with other families/households or reside within institutions, such as Women's Aid shelters. Second, and more fundamentally, the validity of overcrowding as a indicator of lone parent deprivation should be questioned. Kissman (91) argues that too *large* a house presents additional burdens for lone parents in terms of running costs and housework. Thus, it can be argued that under-occupancy is as great a problem for lone parents as over-occupancy.

Thus, for lone parents, information on both under-occupancy and over-occupancy should be considered. Such information is provided within the G.B. published census volumes (GRO(S) 93a). In Strathclyde Region, 29% of lone parent households live in accommodation that is perfectly matched to their space requirements; however, 65% have surplus space and 6% have insufficient space (Table 6.2). Clearly, if under-occupancy is a problem for lone parent households then the amount of unsuitable accommodation is far greater than the overcrowding statistics suggest; ten

Table 6.1
Deprivation : Household Types in Britain (1991)

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION		PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD TYPE WITH EACH DEPRIVATION					
		OVERCROWDED ACCOMODATION	POORER HOUSING AMENITIES[1]	NON OWNER OCCUPIERS	NON CAR OWNERS	ILL HOUSEHOLDS[2]	TOTAL NUMBER H/HOLDS
ADULT	CHILDREN UNDER 16						
Lone (< pension age)	No	0	27	51	80	30	3,302,289
Lone (pension age)	No	0	27	45	44		2,564,137
LONE	**YES**	3	23	68	65	11	914,221
Two (male & female)	No	*	18	26	23	30	6,324,700
Two (male & female)	Yes	6	13	24	13	10	4,334,348
Two (same sex)	No	1	25	40	40	31	607,614
Two (same sex)	Yes	6	21	50	46	19	119,572
Three+ (male & female+)	No	1	17	23	15	30	2,424,945
Three+ (male & female)	Yes	13	14	24	14	22	1,184,687
Three+ (same sex)	No	2	21	54	35	24	99,206
Three+ (same sex)	Yes	14	22	51	43	26	16,371
ALL HOUSEHOLDS		2.2	19.3	33.6	33.3	24.7	21,892,090
ALL FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS		6.4	14.6	30.8	21.3	12.6	6,569,199

Sources : Office Of Population Census and Surveys (1993a), Tables 42 and 44
Notes : 1 - Defined as "Lacking or sharing the use of a bath/shower and/or inside W.C. and/or no central heating"
: 2 - Defined as "The number of (lone parent) households containing persons with limiting long-term illness"
Legend : * - Negligible, but not zero

Table 6.2
Occupancy Norms : Households In Strathclyde Region

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION		OCCUPANCY NORMS		
ADULTS	CHILDREN	UNDER	PARITY	OVER
A	B	C	D	E
Lone (< pension age)	No	95	5	0
Lone (pension age)	No	98	2	0
Lone	Yes	65	29	6
Two (male & female)	No	88	10	2
Two (male & female)	Yes	79	16	5
Two (same sex)	No	73	22	5
Two (same sex)	Yes	50	32	18
Three +	No	75	19	6
Three +	Yes	63	24	13

Source : General Register Scotland (1993a), Table 69

Notes : Occupancy norms are calculated on the basis of household composition and rooms available to the household. 'Under' refers to underoccupation, 'Parity' implies that household space requirements are perfectly matched to rooms available and 'Over' refers to overoccupation.

times as many lone parent households experience under-occupancy (compared to the number experiencing overcrowding). Nevertheless, as Table 6.2 (column d) demonstrates, a relatively high proportion of lone parent households reside in accommodation that is perfectly suited to their needs; at 29%, the proportion of lone parent households is much higher, for example, than the proportion of two adult, [MF] households with children. (16%). However, this should not be taken as an indication of relative advantage in favour of lone parent households; unlike lone parent households, under-occupancy may not be a problem for these households (perfectly suitable accommodation for these households may include those with space that is surplus to basic necessity), i.e. in general, these households will have access to greater financial resources and/or will contain more household members capable of contributing toward the upkeep of the home.

Similarly, the positive finding that the vast majority of lone parent households do not contain anyone with a long term illness should not imply relative advantage. Rather, this figure is strongly influenced by the age of the persons within the household; the older the person, the more likely they are to be ill. Given that lone parents with children under 16, are younger than the population as a whole, then the 'healthier' a household should be expected to be. Others have shown that under different definitions of a healthy household, lone parent families are far from healthy (Hanson 86).

There is no disputing the fact that a substantial proportion of lone parents lack at least one basic household amenity, i.e. private use of a bath or shower or toilet or no central heating system, nor that the majority are not home owners or car owners. These demonstrate the importance of public services to the majority of the lone parent population. Public transport is likely to be a key determinant of lone parents mobility among the 66% of lone parent householders who are not car

owners. Similarly, their housing situation will be determined by the availability and quality of public sector housing. With the National Government committed to restricting the role of the public sector in 'private' life, it is probable that there will be a gradual shift toward private provision of public social housing in the foreseeable future. In the meantime, those reliant on public provision must face the transitional difficulties to be endured as public services are residualised in the aftermath of privatisation programmes (Forrest & Murie 88).

6.2.2 LONE PARENT AND OTHER HOUSEHOLD TYPES

Absolute deprivation among lone parents gives an indication of what the relative standing of lone parent households among all households will be. For example, it is not surprising to find that lone parent households have the second-lowest rate of car ownership, given that two thirds do not own a car (Table 6.1). For housing amenities the conclusion is similar, but the extent of relative deprivation is less extreme; the proportion of lone parent households with poor housing amenities is only slightly worse than the household average.

However, the overcrowding statistics exhibit a mismatch between absolute and relative deprivation (therein, demonstrating the importance of a multi-method appraisal of deprivation); although virtually all lone parent households have accommodation that is adequate for their requirements, more lone parent households are *overcrowded* (3%) than the household average (2.2%). Overcrowding is not a common social problem, although comparison of the results for households with children and those without, demonstrates it is more of a 'family' issue, i.e. it is mainly found within households with dependent children. With this insight, the lone parent results are particularly significant; a greater proportion of lone parents were overcrowded than each of the six non-family households, while, in contrast, lone parent households were the least overcrowded of all households with families (see below).

More generally, lone parent households are relatively worse-off compared to other households and family households. Columns c to g of Table 6.1 clearly show that lone parent households are relatively deprived. Alongside lone pensioners and multi-adult same sex households with children (many of whom will contain lone parent families), lone parent households are among the most deprived household groups in Britain, i.e. each has a the low QoL, according to the external measures.

Comparing lone parent households to other types of household, provides a useful indication of lone parents' general standing in terms of deprivation (external QoL). It may, however, be more appropriate to focus on how lone parents compare with other family-based households, i.e. all households containing families with at least one dependent child aged 18 or under. As Table 6.1 shows, households with dependent children are less likely to be deprived than households with no dependent children (except for overcrowding). Of course, the household level of analysis, gave some indications of the relative standing of lone parent households and other family households, i.e. it was

observed that lone parent households and households with three adults, of the same sex with dependent children were more likely to be deprived than other household types.

In general, lone parent households fare relatively less well when compared with other family households (than against households with no children). For housing amenities, owner occupation and car ownership, lone parents are relatively *more* disadvantaged compared to other families. Taking car ownership as an example, twice as many lone parents do not own a car compared to the average household (65% compared to 33%), this falls to three times as many lone parents without a car when compared against the family average (65% compared to 21%). *Conversely*, lone parent households are *as* healthy as other family households (11% contain a person with a long term illness, compared to 13%) but, are *substantially* 'healthier' on average than non-family households (11% compared to 25%). Thus, even here where lone parents are cast in a positive light, the relative advantage is greatly reduced when comparisons are drawn against family households, rather than the household average.

However, overcrowding is the exception to the rule. As was noted previously (6.2.1b), fewer lone parent households are overcrowded than each of the other family households. This is the single indicator which casts lone parents in a more positive light when they are compared to family households. However, given the interpretative difficulties associated with overcrowding statistics (7.2.1a), and the other results cited above, it can be concluded that lone parents, when placed in their proper context (compared with family households) fare even more unfavourably than more general household analysis suggests.

Finally, attention is turned to the differences between lone parent households and two parent households of one male adult and one female adult (hereafter, two parent [MF] households). Once again, the relative standing of these two household groups can be inferred from the preceding discussion; unlike lone parent households, two parent [MF] households are not one of the three most deprived household types. However, the extent to which lone parents are more deprived than two parent households becomes readily apparent under direct comparison. Thus, just as the focus on family households (as opposed to all households) cast lone parents in a more unfavourable light, so the focus on two parent [MF] households has the same effect. Of particular note are the findings that lone parent households are *four times* more likely not to own a car (65% as opposed to 13% for two parent [MF] households).

There is much experience of deprivation within lone parent households. This is an important finding that validates the line of enquiry the thesis is committed to pursue. However, the thesis is also concerned to move beyond single summations to chart the multi-dimensional (complexity) of lone parents' life experiences. It was found that lone parent deprivation was multi-dimensional, i.e. deprivation is experienced in all domains. Finally, it was shown that lone parents were relatively more likely to be deprived than other household types; the more appropriate the comparative basis, the more deprived lone parents are found to be.

6.3 EXTERNAL QUALITY OF LIFE : LONE PARENTS IN STRATHCLYDE REGION

6.3.1 A GEOGRAPHY OF LONE PARENT QUALITY OF LIFE

Does the QoL experienced by lone parent households exhibit any geographical variation? This question is addressed at the regional, district and local levels using deprivation indicators from the 1991 G.B. Census Of Population.

6.3.1a Do Strathclyde Lone Parents Differ?

The extent of deprivation among lone parent households in Strathclyde is above the British average for lone parent households; this conclusion can be drawn for *each* of the indicators of deprivation reported in Table 6.3. For example, 83% of lone parent households in Strathclyde Region don't own a car, compared to only 68% for lone parents in other parts of Britain. Thus, the relatively poorer standing of the Strathclyde's lone parent households (vis-à-vis other British lone parent households) is also characteristic of those deprivation indicators on which they compared favourably against other household groups. For example, despite the fact that only 4.7% of lone parent households in Strathclyde are overcrowded, the equivalent proportion for the rest of Britain is much lower at 2.7%. Clearly, Strathclyde's lone parent households are more likely to be deprived than British lone parent households in general.

Is this relative deprivation attributable to regional variation (Strathclyde factor) or sub-national variation (Scottish factor). The former can be identified when the Scottish and British results are similar to one another, but differ to that of Strathclyde. The latter can be identified when the Strathclyde and Scottish results are similar to one another, but differ from the British.

Home ownership differs markedly between lone parents in Scotland and the rest of Britain (Table 6.3); non-Scottish lone parents are twice as likely to be owner-occupiers (33% compared to 14% for Strathclyde Region and the rest of Scotland). Thus, housing tenure is a key difference between Scottish lone parents and those from the rest of Britain. Less substantial differences are found between Scottish and British lone parents in terms of car ownership and basic housing amenities; *marginally* more Scottish lone parent households are likely to be without a car or a basic household amenity. However, in addition to these sub-national differences, there is a regional dimension, i.e. Strathclyde's lone parent households are, in turn, more likely than other Scottish lone parent households to be without a car. Thus, in terms of car ownership and housing amenities, there are

Table 6.3
Deprivation Indicators
: Lone Parent Households With Children Under 16 In Strathclyde, Rest Of Scotland and Rest Of Britain (1991)

INDICATOR OF DEPRIVATION / DEPRIVATION TRAIT	PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS WITH EACH DEPRIVATION: STRATHCLYDE	OTHER SCOTLAND	OTHER BRITAIN
A (B)	C	D	E
OVERCROWDING			
More than 1 person/room	4.5	2.7	2.7
HOUSING AMENITIES[1]			
Inadequate Standard	34.2	26.3	22.6
HOUSING TENURE			
Not An Owner Occupier	86.0	86.4	67.6
CAR OWNERSHIP			
Not A Car Owner	82.5	71.4	64.2
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY LEVEL			
Inactive (all)	64.6	55.2	57.6
Inactive (Male)	45.4	33.4	32.3
Inactive (Female)	66.0	57.0	59.7
LONG-TERM ILLNESS[2]			
Ill Person In Household	12.9	10.2	10.4

Sources : Register General Scotland (1993a) Tables 40, 42 and 44.
: Office Of Population Census And Surveys (1993a) Tables 40, 42, and 44.

Notes : 1 - Defined as " Lacking or sharing the use of a bath/shower and/or insider W.C. and/or no central heating ".
: 2 - Defined as " The number of (lone parent) households containing persons with limiting long-term illness ".

regional and sub-national variations that place Strathclyde's lone parent households apart from other lone parent households.

Finally, there are Strathclyde dimensions to lone parent deprivation. That is, Scottish & British lone parent households are comparable in terms of their economic activity level, overcrowding, 'illness', i.e. Strathclyde's lone parent households are more likely to experience these deprivations. Thus, in terms of economic activity, health and housing space, there is a Strathclyde dimension to lone parent deprivation.

In summary, it is readily apparent that lone parent households in Strathclyde are more deprived than lone parent households from other parts of Britain. The variation reflects both sub-national (Scottish) and regional (Strathclyde) factors. In conclusion, lone parents from Strathclyde do differ.

6.3.1b Variations Within Strathclyde Region

Table 6.4 compares lone parent households from the nineteen district council areas of Strathclyde Region using the same deprivation indicators from the 1991 G.B. Census Of Population. For each indicator, data is provided on the proportion who experience each deprivation (absolute deprivation) and, in parenthesis, the ratio of that proportion to the Strathclyde average for lone parent households (relative deprivation among lone parents). The most obvious conclusion to be drawn is that there are substantial variations between districts (Table 6.4). Clearly, the Strathclyde statistics discussed in the previous chapter conceal more than reveal about the geography of lone parent deprivation.

The district councils are ranked according to the mean ratio of the six deprivation indicators (excluding the gender breakdowns in economic activity patterns). The districts can be divided into seven groups on the basis of these values, i.e. from the least deprived:

1) Eastwood and Bearsden & Milngavie
2) East Kilbride
3) Kyle & Carrick, Cumbernauld & Kilsyth, Strathkelvin, Argyll & Bute and Clydesdale.
4) Cunninghame, Kilmarnock & Loudoun and Monklands.
5) Cumnock & Doon Valley, Dumbarton, Inverclyde and Motherwell
6) Hamilton, Renfrew and Clydebank
7) Glasgow

The extent of the district-level variation at the extremes (comparing lone parent households from Eastwood with those from Glasgow) is marked. Lone parent households from Glasgow are almost twice as likely to include of a person with a long term limiting illness, twice as likely to be lacking a basic household amenity, twice as likely to be economically inactive (if a women), two and a half times more likely not to own a car, three times as likely to be renting their accommodation, thrice as likely to be economically inactive (if a man) and ***seventy*** times more likely to be living in overcrowded accommodation.

Some districts have particular profiles which are worthy of note. On the positive side, the proportion of lone parent households from Kyle & Carrick with poor housing amenities is markedly below the average for Strathclyde average (5% compared to 34% [Table 6.4]). Similarly, significantly fewer male lone parents from Bearsden & Milngavie are economically inactive (15% compared to 45% [Table 6.4]). Conversely, the proportion of lone parent households from Clydebank and Renfrew with poor housing amenities is markedly above the average for the Strathclyde (49% and 45% compared to 34% [Table 6.4]).

The gender breakdown on economic activity rates reveals interesting patterns. While male lone parent householders are less likely to be economically inactive than female lone parent householders in each district, women from some districts within Strathclyde are more likely to be economically active than men from other parts of the region. As Figure 6.1 demonstrates, the female lone parent population from Eastwood, Bearsden & Milngavie, Argyll & Bute, Strathkelvin and East Kilbride

Table 6.4 : Deprivation Indicators : Lone Parent Households With Children Under 16 The In District Council Areas Of Strathclyde

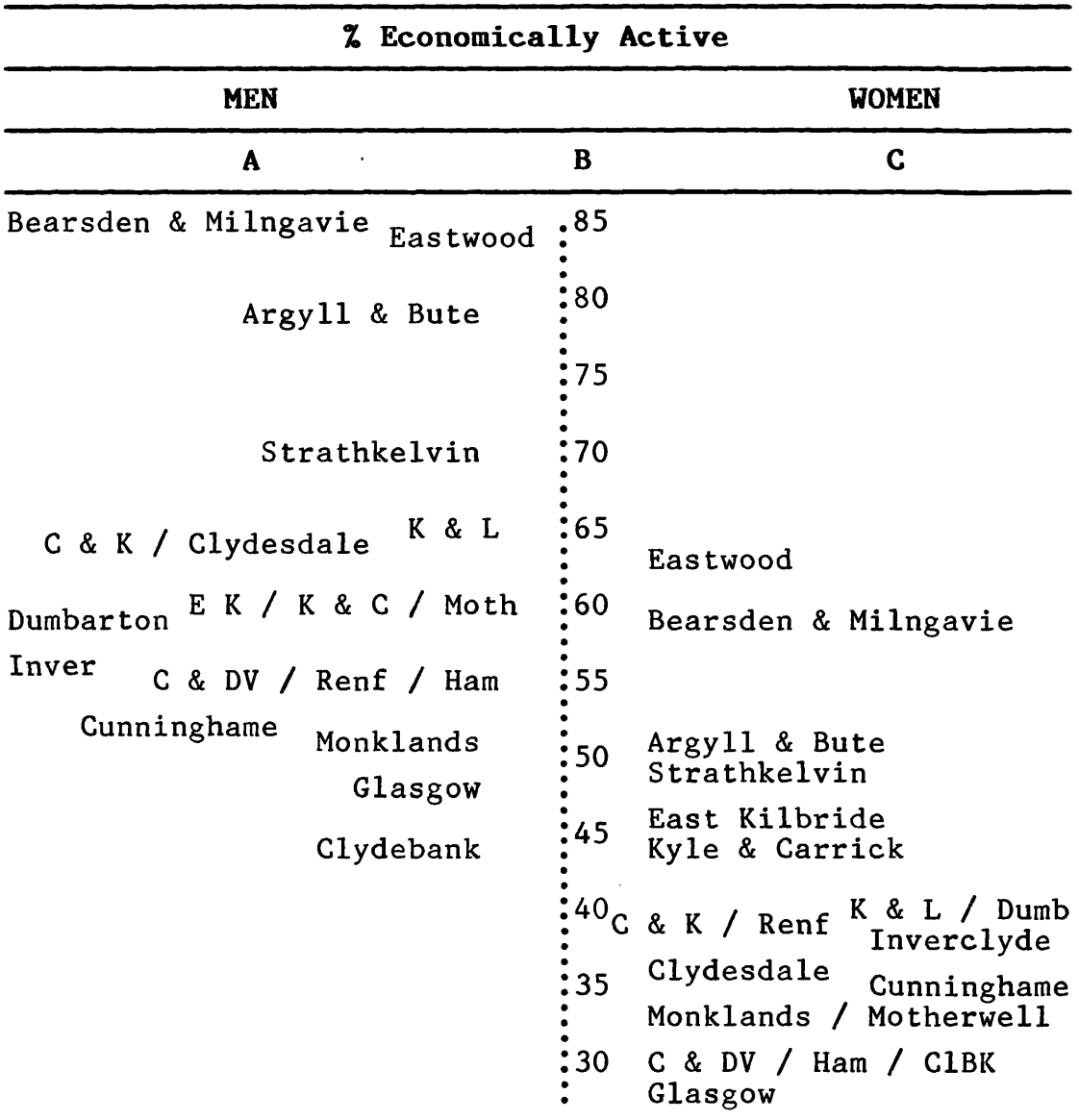
DISTRICT COUNCILS IN STRATHCLYDE RANK ORDER	PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH DISTRICT WITH EACH DEPRIVATION (RATIO TO STRATHCLYDE MEAN FOR LONE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS)							
	OVERCROWDED ACCOMODATION	INADEQUATE HOUSING AMENITIES[1]	NON OWNER OCCUPIERS	NON CAR OWNERS	ECONOMICALLY INACTIVE ALL	ECONOMICALLY INACTIVE MEN	ECONOMICALLY INACTIVE WOMEN	ILLNESS IN[2] HOUSEHOLD
1 Eastwood	1 (2)	22 (65)	31 (37)	34 (41)	35 (54)	16 (36)	37 (56)	8 (62)
2 Bearsden & Milngavie	1 (18)	21 (63)	39 (45)	35 (42)	39 (60)	15 (23)	41 (61)	5 (37)
3 East Kilbride	1 (2)	12 (35)	77 (90)	70 (84)	53 (82)	40 (87)	54 (82)	10 (81)
4 Kyle & Carrick	3 (62)	5 (15)	78 (60)	72 (87)	55 (85)	40 (88)	56 (85)	11 (83)
5 Strathkelvin	2 (56)	18 (52)	69 (80)	66 (80)	50 (77)	30 (67)	51 (77)	11 (85)
6= Cumbernauld & Kilsyth	1 (33)	11 (32)	76 (93)	76 (92)	59 (91)	36 (79)	61 (92)	13 (101)
6= Argyll & Bute	3 (60)	24 (70)	78 (91)	65 (79)	46 (71)	21 (46)	49 (74)	9 (71)
8 Clydesdale	3 (49)	16 (46)	82 (95)	70 (84)	61 (95)	36 (78)	64 (97)	11 (82)
9 Cunninghame	3 (62)	15 (43)	86 (100)	80 (97)	64 (99)	48 (74)	65 (99)	12 (92)
10 Kilmarnock & Loudoun	3 (69)	22 (65)	85 (99)	77 (93)	59 (91)	35 (76)	60 (91)	10 (78)
11 Monklands	3 (64)	11 (31)	91 (106)	84 (102)	66 (101)	49 (109)	67 (101)	15 (113)
12 Cumnock & Doon Valley	2 (51)	29 (85)	94 (109)	83 (100)	68 (105)	45 (99)	70 (105)	14 (109)
13 Dumbarton	4 (73)	40 (118)	85 (103)	78 (95)	59 (91)	41 (63)	60 (92)	11 (84)
14 Motherwell	3 (73)	22 (65)	92 (107)	82 (100)	65 (101)	40 (88)	67 (102)	16 (121)
15 Inverclyde	5 (118)	20 (60)	86 (100)	86 (104)	61 (95)	44 (97)	62 (94)	12 (96)
16 Hamilton	4 (100)	34 (99)	86 (100)	79 (96)	68 (105)	45 (99)	70 (106)	14 (106)
17 Renfrew	5 (107)	45 (131)	83 (97)	81 (99)	60 (92)	45 (99)	61 (92)	12 (94)
18 Clydebank	3 (69)	49 (143)	93 (109)	85 (103)	62 (108)	56 (123)	70 (107)	12 (95)
19 Glasgow	6 (140)	47 (139)	89 (104)	90 (109)	70 (109)	52 (104)	72 (108)	14 (108)

Sources : Register General Scotland (1993a), Tables 40, 42, 44 and 69.

Notes : District Councils are ordered by rank, with the most favourable conditions found higher up the table. The rank represents the mean ratio for six dimensions, i.e. excluding gender divisions for economic activity levels. The mean ratios, in decending order are 43, 44, 62, 70, 72, 74, 74, 75, 82, 83, 86, 93, 94, 95, 96, 101, 103, 105, and 118

: Definitions as for Table 6.5

Figure 6.1
Lone Parent Economic Activity Rates By Gender
: District Council Areas Of Strathclyde Region



Source : General Register Scotland (1993a), Table 40

Key : ClBK - Clydebank; C & K - Cumbernauld & Kilsyth; C & DV - Cumnock & Doon Valley; Dumb - Dumbarton; E K - East Kilbride; Ham - Hamilton; Inver - Inverclyde; K & C - Kyle & Carrick; K & L - Kilmarnock & Loudoun; Renf - Renfrew

have higher or comparable economic activity rates than the male lone parent population of many other districts within Strathclyde.

What accounts for these geographical variations in deprivation? Readers familiar with Strathclyde Region will recognise that lone parents fare better in the more affluent districts of the region. Furthermore, significant variations can be discerned between macro-living environments, i.e. lone parents in the urban periphery (ranks 1 to 3 in Table 6.4) are less deprived than those outside the

urbanised core (ranks 4 to 10), who, in turn, are less deprived than those in urbanised areas (ranks 11 to 19). Thus, an appreciation of the general character of an area is also necessary in addition to an appreciation of familial status. The extent to which this represents an 'area effect' (lone parents are more likely to be employed because they reside in Eastwood), or a reflection of social composition (lone parents who work are more likely to reside in Eastwood) cannot be estimated on the basis of published census data alone. Such issues will be re-addressed later in the thesis when migration patterns are discussed.

6.3.2 GEOGRAPHICAL VARIATIONS IN QUALITY OF LIFE BETWEEN FAMILIES

One final issue pertaining to geographical variation in deprivation must be considered, i.e. the relative standing of lone parent households vis-à-vis two parent [MF] households in different places. In this section, it is shown that the extent of advantages experienced by two parent [MF] households over lone parent households, varies between district council areas.

Table 6.5 compares lone parent and two parent [MF] households for five deprivations (columns c to g) using data from the 1991 G.B. Census Of Population. A relative deprivation index (column h) ranks districts (column a); those districts toward the top of the table are those in which lone parent households most closely approximate two parent [MF] households. Using the positive aspect of each deprivation indicator, e.g. the proportion of householders who are car owners, rather than the proportion of non car-owners, the lone parent figure is expressed as a percentage of the two parent total for each deprivation indicator. A value of 100 demonstrates that lone parents share the same characteristics as two parents, progressively higher values indicate that lone parents are increasingly better-off and vice-versa.

There is a clear division in the table between Eastwood and Bearsden & Milngavie (ranks 1 & 2) and all other districts (column h, Table 6.5); lone parent households in these two areas are much more like two parent [MF] households than is the case elsewhere. As was reported in Table 6.4, the absolute deprivation faced by lone parents in both these areas is lower than in any other district (column i, Table 6.5). Thus, lone parents outside Eastwood and Bearsden & Milngavie experience a double disadvantage, i.e. they are also more deprived relative to two parent [MF] households in their local area.

This conclusion is drawn on the basis of the rank order of districts for absolute deprivation (column i, Table 6.5) and relative (to two parent) deprivation (column a, Table 6.5). Classification of districts according to their index value (col. h) leads to further insights. Whereas there are seven district groups for absolute deprivation (6.3.1b), only two distinctive groups are evident for relative deprivation. Eastwood and Bearsden & Milngavie are most favourably placed on both. Thus, for the remaining seventeen districts, there is a convergence of experiences, i.e. differences between districts for absolute deprivation does not exist for the relative measure.

Table 6.5
Single Family Households With Children Under 16 Without Deprivation : Lone Parent Relative To Two Parent Households In The District Council Areas Of Strathclyde Region

RATIO OF LONE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT DEPRIVATION AGAINST TWO PARENT HOUSEHOLDS (INDEX = 100)

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Eastwood	98	82	72	69	98	83.8	1
2	Bearsden & Milngavie	98	86	66	68	101	83.8	2
3	Argyll & Bute	100	90	41	42	100	74.6	6=
4	Strathkelvin	100	88	39	38	100	73.0	5
5	Kyle & Carrick	99	99	32	34	99	72.6	4
6	Clydesdale	99	91	27	42	100	71.8	8
7	East Kilbride	100	93	31	36	98	71.6	3
8	Cumbernauld & Kilsyth	99	94	32	30	99	70.8	6=
9	Monklands	101	98	20	23	106	69.6	11
10	Cunninghame	99	93	23	26	101	68.4	9
11	Motherwell	100	91	19	25	104	67.8	14
12	Kilmarnock & Loudoun	99	88	23	28	100	67.6	10
13	Inverclyde	98	93	23	21	100	67.0	15
14	Hamilton	103	79	22	27	102	66.6	16
15	Cumnock & Doon Valley	100	87	16	23	103	65.8	12
16	Glasgow	102	77	19	18	104	64.0	19
17	Dumbarton	99	71	23	27	99	63.8	13
18	Clydebank	101	75	14	23	104	63.4	18
19	Renfrew	97	68	23	24	99	62.2	17

Sources : Register General Scotland (1993a), Tables 42, 44 and 69.

Key : A - Rank of H
B - District Councils
C - Occupancy Rates: The proportion of lone parent households with sufficient space for its households composition/size, expressed as a percentage of the equivalent proportion for two parent households.
D - Housing Amenities: The proportion of lone parent households that do NOT lack or share the use of a bath or shower and/or inside W.C. and/or no central heating, expressed as a percentage of the equivalent proportion for two parent households.
E - Owner Occupation: The proportion of lone parent households who own their own homes, expressed as a percentage of the equivalent proportion for two parent households.
F - Car Ownership: The proportion of lone parent households who own a car, expressed as a percentage of the equivalent proportion for two parent households.
G - Healthy Households: The proportion of lone parent households who do NOT comprise of a person with a limiting long-term illness, expressed as a percentage of the equivalent proportion for two parent households.
H - Relative Deprivation Index: The mean ratio for the five deprivation indices. Presented in descending order.
I - Rank of Lone Parent Deprivation Index: From Table 6.4, which ranks the District Council areas of Strathclyde in terms of the deprivation amongst its lone parent population (lowest = least deprivation).

East Kilbride and Glasgow are the two outstanding examples of convergence. In East Kilbride, lone parents are significantly less deprived than lone parents in other areas (except Bearsden & Milngavie and Eastwood: see notes, Table 6.4). However, this 'advantageous' position is not evident when the relative status vis-à-vis two parent [MF] households is the basis of analysis; indeed, lone parents in four other districts authorities (Argyll & Bute, Strathkelvin, Kyle & Carrick & Clydesdale) are more alike two parent [MF] households in their area (in terms of deprivation experience). Thus, the lower levels of absolute deprivation are not a distinguishing characteristic of the *lone* parent households in East Kilbride; rather, they owe more to the overall standing of *family households* in the area. The converse is the case for Glasgow. In Glasgow, lone parent households are significantly more likely to be deprived than lone parents in other areas (see notes, Table 6.4). However, this disadvantageous position is not evident in their relative standing vis-à-vis two parent [MF] households; indeed, lone parents in two other district authorities (Clydebank and Renfrew) are less alike two parent [MF] households (in terms of deprivation experience). Thus, the higher levels of absolute deprivation are not a distinguishing characteristic of the *lone* parent households in Glasgow; rather they owe more to the overall standing of *family* households in the area.

In conclusion, lone parent households are more deprived than two parent [MF] households. In general, lone parent households are more alike two parent households in areas where there is less deprivation. While the absolute level of lone parent deprivation in these affluent areas is unsurprising, there was no reason to expect that lone parents would be *relatively* less deprived vis-à-vis two parent households in these areas. However, there is a less distinct geography of relative deprivation, such variation that does exist owes more to the general socio-economic character of the area than to other geographical factors.

6.4 INTERNAL QUALITY OF LIFE : LONE PARENTS IN STRATHCLYDE REGION

Secondary data analysis has shown that lone parent households are more likely to be deprived than most other types of household and, in particular, they are more likely to be deprived than other households with dependent children (6.2.1b). Furthermore, it was found that the extent of difference varies geographically (6.3.2). These results are not merely statistical constructions, i.e. the statistics reflect real differences between two parent and lone parent households within and across bounded spaces. However, according to the framework for a QoL project that was developed in chpt. 4 (Figure 4.1 in 4.1.1), these standardised comparative insights must be juxtaposed against the subject's interpretation of their own condition. Where the subject's perception (internal reality) matches the comparative assessment (external reality), the QoL implications are straightforward. Where there is a mismatch, this contradiction must be examined before explanations for QoL are pursued.

Section 6.4 summarises lone parents' self-assessment of their QoL as the second stage in the QoL analysis. Three aspects are discussed, i.e. satisfaction with sub-domains, importance of domains, and changes in quality of life over time. Furthermore, indices of QoL (at domain and overall level) and satisfaction (overall, areal and personal) are calculated using this basic QoL data.

6.4.1 IMPORTANCE OF LIFE DOMAINS

Respondents were asked to rate fourteen separate life domains for the contribution each makes to their quality of life. Opinions were expressed on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 (not at all important) to 5 (extremely important). Overall, the mean rating was 4.032 (Table 6.6); in descriptive terms, this informs us that lone parents consider the life domains evaluated to make 'very important' contributions to their quality of life. The mean value provides a useful benchmark to assess the relative importance of different domains, for as Table 6.6 shows, there are considerable differences between domains. The relative importance of domains can be estimated at two levels, i.e. variation in the collective assessments of lone parents (6.4.1b) and variations in the order of importance among lone parents (6.4.1b).

Table 6.6
Lone Parents' View of Quality-of-Life I : Importance of Domains

MEAN VALUE RANK (c)	DOMAIN	MEAN	MEAN RANK (RANK) VALUE		MODAL GROUP	% VERY IMP	% EXT IMP
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Family Life	4.769	10.24	(1)	5	95.2	82.4
2	Crime	4.690	10.12	(2)	5	98.2	76.0
3	Control over Life	4.673	9.95	(3)	5	94.5	75.4
4	Health	4.555	9.25	(4)	5	90.4	67.3
5	Housing	4.487	9.03	(5)	5	88.6	60.8
6	Financial	4.339	8.51	(6)	5	83.8	53.5
7	Opportunities	4.077	7.64	(7)	5	73.8	44.6
8	Service Provision	3.983	7.11	(8)	5	67.0	38.1
9	Neighbourhood	3.827	6.34	(10)	4	62.9	31.3
10	Advice & Support	3.770	6.60	(9)	5	63.3	33.0
11	Work	3.607	5.85	(12)	4	55.7	26.2
12	Transportation	3.587	5.87	(11)	4	55.2	25.4
13	Leisure	3.283	4.89	(13)	3	40.5	20.8
14	Other Peoples' Attitude	2.726	3.60	(14)	1	30.7	14.8

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (Pilot & Main versions)

Additional Information : Importance evaluations were made on a 5-point rating scale.

Key : A - Rank of C
D - Calculated with Kendall's Co-efficient of Concordance (.W) ; see text for details
G - Proportion of lone parents rating a domain to be at least 'very important', i.e. 4 or 5 on the rating scale.
H - Proportion of lone parents rating a domain to be 'extremely important', i.e. 5 on the rating scale.

6.4.1a Evaluating The Importance Of Domains: The Relative Order Of Lone Parents' Collective Assessments

Family life was considered the most important aspect of their life, with a mean valuation of 4.769 and 82.4% of lone parents rating it extremely important (i.e. the highest possible value on a 5 point scale. Table 6.6 compares family life to the other domains in terms of the mean values (col. c), mean rank values (col. d & e), proportional distributions (col. g & h) and modal values (col. f). Other domains that are particularly important to lone parents are (in descending order) crime, control over life, health, housing and financial matters.

Virtually *all* of the lone parents surveyed considered that crime (98.2%), family (95.2%) and life control (94.5%) were highly important (either 'very' or 'extremely'). At the other extreme, less than half of the lone parents surveyed rated leisure (40.5%) and others peoples' attitude toward them (30.7%) as either 'very' or 'extremely' important. Others' attitude is not merely *relatively* less important; it is of low importance in absolute terms, i.e. it is the only domain for which the most typical opinion was that it was 'not at all important' (25.6% of lone parents and see col. f of Table 6.6).

Subsequent analysis in the thesis must seek to explain why all lone parents consider some domains to be important, while only a minority consider other domains to be important. In particular, the reasons why economic issues (work, financial situation) are only of intermediate significance should be explored. From a geographer's perspective, the low-to-intermediate significance of the more location-oriented domains (transport, leisure & service provision) and the environmental domain (street/neighbourhood) is also an interesting result. Finally, the almost complete agreement among lone parents over the importance of the personal/social domains of crime, family, health and control should also be addressed. The search for explanation begins in the next chapter.

6.4.1b Between Measures Of The Relative Importance Of Domains

In general, the same conclusion can be drawn from different means of estimating the relative importance of domains. For example, the mean value (col. c), mean rank value (col. d) and proportion rating it important (col. g & h) *all* demonstrate that others' attitude is the least important of all the domains that the survey population evaluated (Table 6.6). However, some discrepancies are evident; these are now discussed for the QoL insights they yield. As would be expected, the rank order of domains for the 'mean value' is virtually identical to the rank order of domains for the 'mean rank values'. Minor deviations occur among some of the lesser important domains (lower half of Table 6.6), i.e. between street/neighbourhood and advice & support and between transportation and work. In both cases one domain is ranked higher for the rank of the mean value and the other is ranked higher for the mean rank value. That is, street/neighbourhood and work (which are ranked higher for the *mean* value compared to advice & support and transportation, respectively) are

relatively more important for the lone parent population in aggregate, but less important to more lone parents.

The rank order of domains according to the mean value and the rank order of domains according to the proportion who rate the domain 'very important' is a second useful comparison to make; both of these are absolute measures of importance, one of which is value based (mean), the other proportion-based (percentage of lone parents responding in a particular way). In general, the rank orders are similar. However, two deviations are evident; crime with family life and, once again, advice & support with street/neighbourhood. The higher ranking of crime for the proportional distribution is somewhat misleading; a greater proportion of lone parents 'only' rate crime 'very' important (rather than 'extremely' important) than is the case for family life, where a greater proportion rate family life 'extremely' important, rather than 'very' important. This explains why family life has a higher mean but appears less important when the proportion rating a domain either extremely or very important is the basis of comparison. However, this does not explain the rank variations for advice & support and street/neighbourhood; while advice & support is more likely to be considered to be very or extremely important by lone parents, it is also more likely not to be considered at all important. the partiality of considering only one aggregate measure is readily apparent.

However, these more detailed interpretations do not impinge upon the main conclusion. That is, lone parents were found to discriminate between domains. Economic domains were as important to environmental ones, but less important than social domains.

6.4.2 SATISFACTION INDICATORS

6.4.2a Satisfaction At Sub-Domain Level

Respondents were asked to rate their personal experiences for each domain in terms of two indicators; one of which was more environmental in nature, the other being of a more personal significance. As was outlined in Figure 4.5 in 4.2, the indicators were devised following interviews with lone parents. Each indicator was chosen on the basis that it was relevant to the life experience of lone parents. Satisfaction evaluations were made on a seven-point scale ranging from -3 (way below average) through 0 (average), to +3 (way above average). Overall, the mean rating was +0.071; in descriptive terms this informs us that lone parents are neither significantly satisfied nor dissatisfied with their lot. However, this summation disguises considerable variation in satisfaction with particular indicators.

Of the indicators that were evaluated, lone parents expressed most satisfaction with aspects of their family life; over nine-tenths were satisfied with the relationship they had with their children and almost three quarters were satisfied with the support they received from family members who live locally (Table 6.7). Conversely, least satisfaction was expressed with the actions of the National

Table 6.7
Lone Parents' View of Quality-of-Life II : Sub-Domain Satisfaction

MEAN VALUE RANK	SATISFACTION INDICATOR	MEAN	% SATFIED (RANK)	% DISSATFIED (RANK)	H	DOMAIN
A	B	C	D (E)	F (G)	H	I
1	Relationship with Children	2.395	92.1 (1)	2.3 (30)		FAMLY
2	Family Support in area	1.515	72.5 (3)	16.5 (28)	A	FAMLY
3	Doctors Service	1.406	74.1 (2)	14.3 (29)		HELTH
4	Relation with Neighbours	1.177	69.8 (4)	17.0 (27)		STRET
5	Travel To Work Time	1.153	65.9 (6)	21.2 (25)	A	WORKy
6	Safe Inside Home	1.042	67.0 (5)	20.7 (26)		CRIME
7	Employment Conditions	0.830	63.2 (7)	24.5 (24)		WORKy
8	Appearance of Housing	0.676	62.9 (8)	26.8 (22)	A	HOUS
9	Public Transport Service	0.558	60.4 (9=)	28.9 (18)		TRANS
10	Shops In Local Area	0.519	60.4 (9=)	29.5 (17)	A	SERVC
11	Healthy Local Environment	0.493	54.9 (11)	28.4 (20)	A	HELTH
12	Physical condition of house	0.487	54.7 (12)	27.0 (21)		HOUS
13	Control over decisions	0.435	49.5 (14)	25.9 (23)		CNTRL
14	Advice & Support of others	0.390	53.8 (13)	28.6 (19)		SUPP
15	Community Spirit	0.134	44.5 (16)	30.8 (16)	A	STRET
16	Provision Leisure Facility	0.060	47.0 (15)	37.1 (15)	A	LESUR
17	Vandalism In Area	-0.124	41.2 (18)	41.9 (12)	A	CRIME
18	Reputation of Area	-0.180	40.2 (19)	41.8 (13)	A	ATTIT
19	Amount of spare-time	-0.235	37.1 (20)	41.7 (14)		LESUR
20	Pedestrian Safety in area	-0.247	42.3 (17)	44.7 (11)	A	TRANS
21	Community Groups in area	-0.433	27.8 (22)	46.1 (10)	A	SUPP
22	Local Authority Services	-0.495	33.0 (21)	48.5 (9)		SERVC
23	Influence in local area	-0.837	20.1 (26)	50.5 (8)	A	CNTRL
24	Running costs of home	-0.925	25.5 (23)	59.2 (5=)	A	MONEY
25	Local Employment Training	-0.971	21.4 (25)	59.2 (5=)	A	WORKn
26	Treatment of Single Parent	-1.078	19.1 (27)	58.6 (7)		ATTIT
27	Local Childcare Provision	-1.223	23.8 (24)	66.4 (3)	A	OPPOR
28	Employment Prospects	-1.239	17.6 (28)	64.8 (4)		WORKn
29	Level Of DSS support	-1.617	12.3 (29)	72.4 (2)		MONEY
30	What Govt. doing for you	-2.004	7.5 (30)	81.0 (1)		OPPOR

Source : LPQoL Questionnaire (Pilot & Main versions)

Additional Information : Satisfaction evaluations were made on a 7-point scale, ranging from -3 to +3.

Key : D - Proportion of lone parents who are satisfied with a particular sub-domain (rank satisfaction in column E)
F - Proportion of lone parents who are dissatisfied with a particular sub-domain (rank dissatisfaction in column G)
G - Whether indicator is environmental or not. A denotes an environmental indicator.
H - Areal (A) or thematic ( ) indicator
I - Domain of indicator.

FAMLY - Family HELTH - Health TRANS - Transport
HOUS - Housing CRIME - Crime SERVC - Services
LESUR - Leisure MONEY - Money SUPP - Advice & Support
CNTRL - Control ATTIT - Others Attitudes Toward Them
WORKy - Work for workers WORKn - Work for non-workers
STRET - Street/Neighborhood OPPOR - Opportunities

Government (81% were dissatisfied) and the level of D.S.S. support (72% were dissatisfied). Several aspects of this table are worthy of commentary.

First, the more personal sub-domains tend to be the aspects with which lone parents are most satisfied (two thirds of the sub-domains for which most satisfaction is expressed [ranks 1 to 15] are 'personal' by nature [col. h]), but also the aspects with which the strongest opinions are expressed (of the five domains for which lone parents are most satisfied and the five domains with which lone parents are least satisfied, only three are 'environmental' by nature). This is not to dismiss the importance of the importance of environmental life concerns. Rather, travel-to-work and local family support are sources of much satisfaction, whereas local childcare provision is a source of much dissatisfaction. However, the importance of environmental conditions should not be overstated.

Second, the working experiences of lone parents are particularly significant. On the grounds of relevance, working and non-working lone parents were asked to answer different questions on their experience of work. Working lone parents expressed high satisfaction, in sharp contrast to non-working lone parents. These results are empirically significant; dispelling some of the concerns over working lone parents' experiences in the labour market, while raising concern over the prospects of those non-working lone parents entering the labour market. However, they are significant for QoL research in general, i.e. the sharply diverging experiences of working and non-working lone parents demonstrate the importance of appropriate indicator selection in assessing QoL.

Third, some insights can be gained by comparing the rank positions calculated through different approaches. The rank position for the mean value (col. a) and the proportional distributions (col. e) are broadly similar. However, as for importance, where the rank for the mean is higher than the rank for the percentage distribution, this either implies that there is less prevalence of *extreme* satisfaction (+3) among the satisfied, or more prevalence of *slight* dissatisfaction among the dissatisfied. this conclusion applies to family support in area (against doctors service), travel to work time (against safety in the home) employment prospects (against local childcare) peoples treatment of single parents (against running costs of the home and, in turn, employment training locally) and shops in the area (against public transport service).

However, the most significant point from the table is the *extent* of difference within the table, i.e. although lone parents are a deprived population group, there is much that is positive about their life experiences. Such knowledge is too easily overlooked by studies that seek the single summation, or the major conclusion in QoL research.

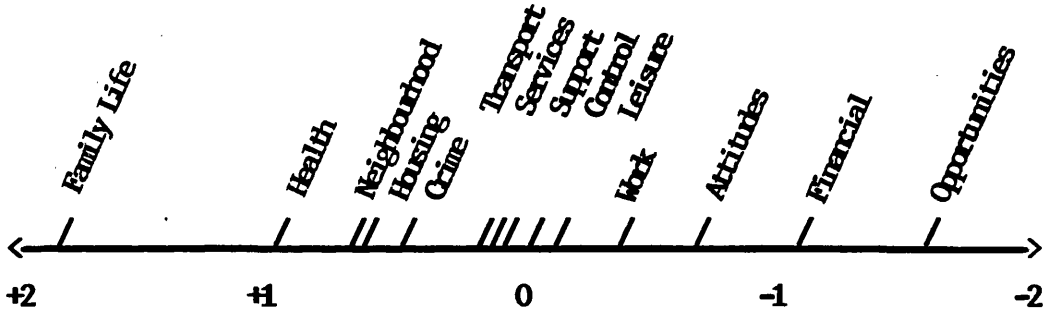
6.4.2b Satisfaction At Domain Level

Understanding is enhanced when the mean domain satisfaction is considered; that is, the mean of both satisfaction indicators for each domain. The distribution of responses can be organised into five bands (Table 6.8 & Figure 6.2);

Table 6.8 (& Figure 6.2)
Lone Parents' Quality-of-Life, Index I :
Domain Satisfaction

MEAN VALUE RANK	DOMAIN	MEAN SAT	STRENGTH OPINION RANK	EXTREME EVAL. (RANK)	IMPORT RANK
A	B	C	D	E F	G
1	Family Life	1.770	1	49.7 (1)	1
2	Health	0.943	4	26.8 (7=)	4
3	Street/Neighbourhood	0.672	5	26.8 (7=)	9
4	Housing	0.618	6	28.0 (6)	5
5	Crime	0.484	8	28.7 (5)	2
6	Transport	0.133	10	21.9 (9)	12
7	Services	0.095	12	16.1 (14)	8
8	Advice/Support	0.031	14	18.9 (12)	10
9	Control Over Life	-0.081	13	20.8 (10)	3
10	Leisure	-0.107	11	16.2 (13)	13
11	Work	-0.393	9	38.8 (3)	11
12	Other's Attitudes	-0.604	7	19.5 (11)	14
13	Financial	-1.152	3	33.8 (4)	6
14	Opportunities	-1.600	2	45.1 (2)	7

Figure 6.2



Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (Pilot & Main versions)

Additional Information : Mean domain satisfaction levels were calculated by averaging the satisfaction ratings for the two sub-domain indicators for each domain (Table 6.7)

Key : A - Rank of C
C - Mean Domain Satisfaction: Values on a scale from -3 (total dissatisfaction) to +3 (total satisfaction)
D - Strength Of Opinion Rank: Ranking mean satisfaction ('C') on the basis of the numerical value, regardless of direction (positive or negative)
E - Extreme Evaluation Rank: The proportion of respondents whose mean domain satisfaction was either >2 or <-2
F - Rank of E. Descending order from domain with most respondents returning extreme evaluations.
G - Domain Importance Rating: From Table 6.6.

1) Extremely Positive (family life)
2) Positive (health, street, housing, crime)
3) Neutral (transport, services, advice & support, control, leisure)
4) Negative (work, others' attitude)
5) Extremely Negative (financial, opportunities)

The character of the table could have been predicted based on Table 6.7. Thus, the high positive self-assessment of family life reflects the fact that its constituent parts were the aspects of life with which lone parents were most satisfied. Similarly, the high negative self-assessment of 'opportunities' reflects that its constituent parts were fourth-lowest and lowest overall in the sub-domain satisfaction evaluation.

However, some additional insights can be gained at this level of analysis. Within Table 6.8, domains are ranked according to *strength* of lone parent *opinion*, i.e. the direction of dissatisfaction is ignored (col. d). The object of this ranking was to test whether the strongest opinions were registered for the domains for which lone parents were most satisfied (or dissatisfied). It was found that in six of the seven paired comparisons, the extent of difference between pairs implies that no substantive conclusions should be drawn. The domains were also evaluated in terms of the number of respondents who were either *extremely* satisfied or *extremely* dissatisfied for both indicators ('extreme' is defined as mean satisfaction higher than +2, or lower than -2). Here, significant findings did emerge. The 'work' domain, has a much higher ranking. Thus, for work, the strength of *satisfaction*, disguises the true strength of *opinion* that lone parents hold on this issue. Conversely, for street/neighbourhood, health and especially, others' attitude there is no evidence of substantial proportions with polar opposite experiences.

6.4.3 OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE

The importance and satisfaction data provide the basis for a *multiple-additive model* (hereafter MA model) of life quality. However, respondents were also asked to evaluate their overall life quality relative to the average person. This provides a *single measurement* of life quality (hereafter SM model). The key findings from each are now reported.

6.4.3a Temporal Changes In Overall Quality Of Life

Respondents were asked to evaluate their QoL, relative to the average person, at three time periods of their life (current, 5 years ago and five years hence). Respondents evaluated their relative standing using a 21-point ladder ranging from -10 (way below average) through 0 (average) to +10 (way above average).

Table 6.9
Lone Parent's View Of Quality Of Life III
: Overall Quality Of Life Over Time

TIME POINT	PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT SURVEY POPULATION			
	MEAN	SELF-ASSESSED QUALITY OF LIFE RELATIVE TO AVERAGE		
		BELOW	AT	ABOVE
A	B	C	D	E
5 Years Ago	-0.152	53.9	13.0	33.1
Present Time	-1.506	39.2	23.5	37.3
5 Years Hence	+3.124	17.3	18.0	64.7

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (Pilot & Main Versions)
Additional Information : Overall QoL was estimated by lone parents on a 21-point scale, ranging from -10, through 0 to +10. Respondents were asked to place themselves, relative to the average person.
Key : C/D/E - These figures refer to the proportion of lone parents who consider that their QoL is below average, average and above average, respectively.

Overall, the mean rating for the relative quality of life assessments was marginally above average at +0.323; in descriptive terms, over the time period covered, lone parents consider that they experience a marginally higher quality of life than that of the average person. From a distributional perspective, 43.2% perceive themselves to be below average and 52% perceive themselves to be above average. Clearly, this contradicts the portrayal of lone parent life as seen through indicators of deprivation. However, the assessment varied dramatically across time. The mean evaluations for the QoL assessments, relative to the average person, on a scale ranging from -10 to +10, for the past, present and future, were -0.152, -1.506 and +3.124, respectively. In descriptive terms, lone parents are worse off now than they were before, but their lot will improve in the future to a level that is better than it has ever been. This conclusion is reached regardless of whether the mean value (col. b) or the proportion of lone parents who perceive themselves to be above/below average is considered (columns c to e of Table 6.9).

6.4.3b Quality Of Life Index

The *multiple additive* model of QoL was devised by weighting the mean domain satisfaction with the domain importance ratings (Figure 6.3, 6.4) Here, overall QoL is understood as the sum total of domain life experiences. On average, lone parents were found to experience an average quality of life. In quantitative terms, they accord themselves a mean value of +0.486 on a scale of +35 (complete satisfaction, with each domain rated 'extremely important' to them) to -35 (complete dissatisfaction, with each domain rated 'extremely important' to them). In distributional terms,

Figure 6.3

Multiple Additive Model Of Quality Of Life : Research Methodology

Step a) Calculate Domain Satisfaction Indices

$$\text{(Domain) Satisfaction} = \frac{\text{sub-domain Indicator 1} + \text{sub-domain Indicator 2}}{2}$$

Step b) Calculate Quality of Domain Indices

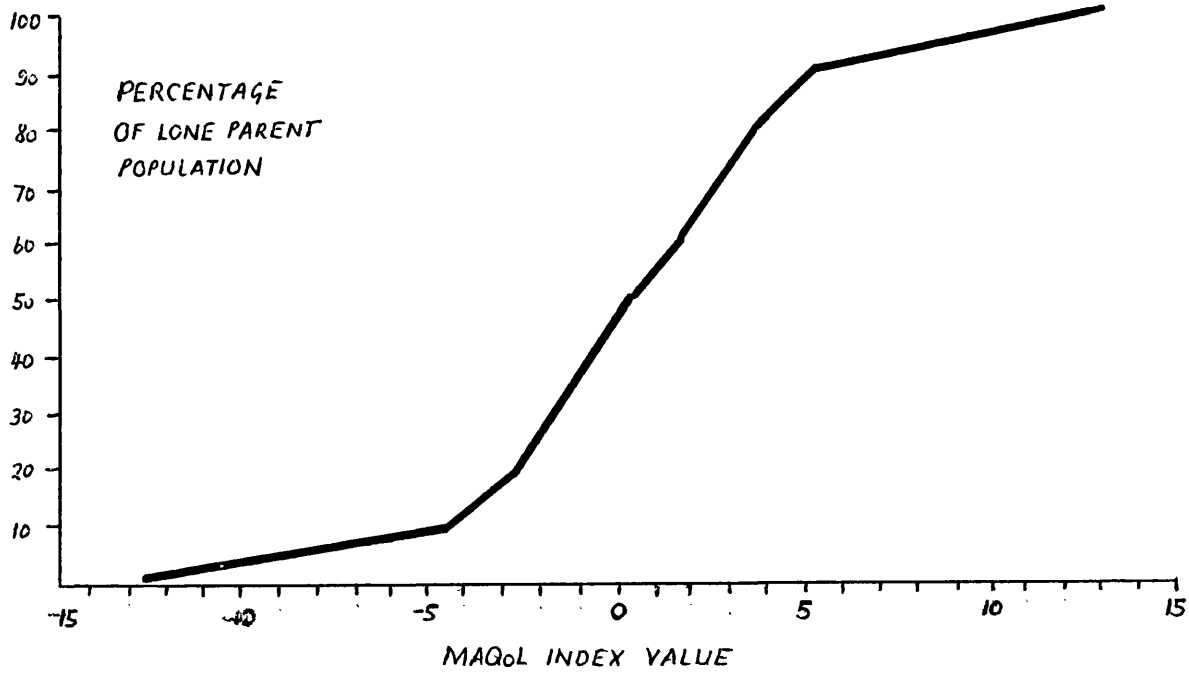
importance of	HOUSING	X	satisfaction with	HOUSING	=	Quality of HOUSING Index
"	NEIGHBORHOOD	X	"	NEIGHBORHOOD	=	Q. of NEIGHBORHOOD Index
"	CRIME LEVELS	X	"	CRIME LEVELS	=	Q. of CRIME SAFETY Index
"	FAMILY	X	"	FAMILY	=	Q. of FAMILY Index
"	HEALTH	X	"	HEALTH	=	Q. of HEALTH Index
"	FINANCE	X	"	FINANCE	=	Q. of FINANCE Index
"	WORK	X	"	WORK	=	Q. of WORK Index
"	LEISURE	X	"	LEISURE	=	Q. of LEISURE Index
"	TRANSPORT	X	"	TRANSPORT	=	Q. of TRANSPORT Index
"	SERVICES	X	"	SERVICES	=	Q. of SERVICES Index
"	ADVICE & SUPPORT	X	"	ADVICE & SUPPORT	=	Q. of ADVCE & SUPP Index
"	OTHERS OUTLOOK	X	"	OTHERS OUTLOOK	=	Q. of OTHERS THINK Index
"	OPPORTUNITIES	X	"	OPPORTUNITIES	=	Q. of OPPORTUNITY Index
"	CONTROL OVER LIFE	X	"	CONTROL OVER LIFE	=	Q. of CONTROL Index

Step c) Calculate Q.o.L. Index

$$\text{The quality of a lone parent's life} = \frac{\text{Sum of Quality of Domain Indices}}{\text{Number of Q. of Domain Indices}}$$

Figure 6.4

Lone Parents' Quality Of Life : Multiple Additive Model



Source: LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)

53.1% of lone parents were calculated to be above average, compared to 46.2% who were calculated to experience a below average QoL. This *appears* to contradict the finding of the SM model (6.4.3a) and the external QoL analysis (6.2, 6.3). However, these have different bases of measurement, i.e. in theory, lone parents could satisfied, but still, *relatively* less satisfied compared to other groups in the population. A more comprehensive analysis of the (in)consistency of the two models of overall QoL is discussed in chapter eight. Presently, attention is turned to the contribution of each of the fourteen domains towards overall quality of life (Table 6.10); eight domains make a positive contribution (col. c). In particular, family life makes the most positive contribution to overall life quality; its index value of +8.588 it is almost double that of health (+4.372), the domain making the next most positive contribution. The remaining domains can be 'grouped' into three bands.

1) The third to fifth highest placed domains (housing, crime and street/neighbourhood) have index values over 50% below that of family life, but more than three times greater than those below.
2) A central cluster of six domains deviate within +/- 0.6 of neutral.
3) Three domains make a strong negative contribution towards overall QoL, particularly, financial situation (-5.191) and opportunities (-6.8) are poorly rated.

An important consideration of the QoL Index is whether it supplements or duplicates the findings of the basic indices of satisfaction and importance. This can be assessed through Columns a & h (domain QoL and domain satisfaction, respectively). It is clear that the domain QoL is largely dictated by domain satisfaction (the ranks for domain QoL are virtually identical to those of domain satisfaction, but differ markedly to those of domain importance - compare col. a & g). There are only two incidences when rankings for domain satisfaction and domain QoL differ (housing with street/neighbourhood & leisure with control - in each case the former is ranked higher for domain QoL, but lower for domain satisfaction).

Finally, the distribution of positive/negative QoL among the lone parent population deserves some attention. At either extreme, there is almost unanimous agreement among lone parents as to the nature of the QoL contribution; 81% of lone parents consider family life to have a positive effect, while 78.7% of lone parents consider the availability of opportunities to have a negative effect on their lives. A second group of six domains (ranks 2-5, 12 & 13) have a majority experience, but with substantial minorities of between one-fifth and one-third who rate deviantly to the mean. Finally, the remaining six domains have roughly equal numbers who rate positive or negative. Clearly, the insights afforded by a disaggregated analysis of QoL are readily apparent.

Table 6.10
Lone Parents' Quality Of Life, Index III : Domain QoL

MEAN VALUE RANK	DOMAIN	MEAN	STRONG OPINON	% +++	% ---	IMP RANK	SAT RANK
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Family Life	8.588	1	80.9	8.8	1	1
2	Health	4.372	4	65.6	20.4	4	2
3	Housing	2.617	5	61.5	28.5	5	4
4	Street/Neighbourhood	2.357	6	60.0	23.8	9	3
5	Crime	2.296	7	56.1	30.1	2	5
6	Transport	0.659	9	47.4	36.2	12	6
7	Service Provision	0.210	13	46.5	38.3	8	7
8	Advice/Support	0.106	14	46.2	34.1	10	8
9	Leisure	-0.305	12	40.2	45.9	13	10
10	Control Over Life	-0.433	11	39.5	40.0	3	9
11	Work	-0.582	10	36.7	46.2	11	11
12	Other's Attitudes	-1.719	8	24.9	55.8	14	12
13	Financial	-5.191	3	20.4	70.3	6	13
14	Opportunities	-6.800	2	10.9	78.7	7	14

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (Pilot & Main versions)

Additional Information : Domain QoL values were calculated by weighting the mean domain satisfaction values of Table 6.9, with the mean importance ratings of Table 6.7, for each domain.

Key : A - Rank of C
C - Domain QoL : The size & nature of the contribution each domain makes toward the overall QoL of lone parents. These form the components of the multiple additive model of QoL
D - Strength Of Opinion Rank : Ranking domain QoL ('C') on the basis of the numerical value, regardless of direction (positive or negative)
E - The proportion of respondents for whom the domain makes a positive contribution to their overall QoL.
F - The proportion of respondents for whom the domain makes a negative contribution to their overall QoL.
G - Rank importance of domains, in descending order from the most important domain (from Table 6.7)
H - Rank domain satisfaction, in descending order from the domain with which lone parents are most satisfied.

6.5 CONCLUSION

6.5.1 EXTERNAL & INTERNAL QUALITY OF LIFE : A SYNTHESIS

The most significant conclusion that can be drawn from the analysis of census deprivation statistics, is that lone parents fare less favourably compared to most other household and family types and that there are geographical variations between lone parents in different areas. Of particular note, is the finding that lone parents from Strathclyde fare less favourably compared to lone parents from elsewhere.

How do these findings compare to the opinions of lone parents? Are the external (census-based) and internal (lone parent survey-based) assessments of lone parent QoL compatible? It must be emphasised that there is no agreed yardstick against which such comparisons can be assessed and that such a comparison is not unproblematic. Comparisons should only be undertaken at a general level. For example, the finding that only 13% of lone parent households are of poorer health (external measure) is broadly consistent with the finding that most of the lone parent population are satisfied with their health. However, such comparisons become problematic if more precise specifications of relationships are attempted, e.g. is 92% satisfied a more consistent result than 80%?

For overall QoL, the comparative basis can be relative, i.e. the SMQoL model reports lone parents' self-assessment of their QoL, *relative* to the average person, while the external dimension refers to the *relative* standing of lone parents vis-à-vis other household groups. There is evidence of *consistency*; deprivation statistics demonstrate that lone parents are among the most deprived household groups and lone parents perceive themselves to be only marginally below average in terms of their QoL. Explaining the more positive QoL of lone parents must be a central concern of the thesis. It may be a reflection that deprivation indicators do not capture the most important concerns of lone parents, or it may be a measure of self-denial among the lone parent survey population. Further analysis is necessary.

At the domain level, there are both inconsistencies and consistent results. Health and work come into the former category. For health, the census finding that most lone parent households did not contain a person with a long term illness is consistent with the survey finding that a high proportion of lone parents are satisfied with their health. Similarly, general dissatisfaction among lone parents with their financial situation and experience of work is consistent with the survey finding that a high proportion of lone parents are economically inactive. However, despite being less likely to be a car owner, most lone parents are satisfied with transport and despite a greater likelihood of poorer housing amenities, most lone parents are satisfied with their housing. Therefore, the extent to which deprivation indicators are useful for lone parents must also be called into question. For example, is

car ownership a sufficient indicator of lone parents mobility needs, when it has been found that most lone parents are satisfied with their transportation, yet most are not car owners?

6.5.2 RESEARCH ISSUES

The results of this chapter have generated a series of further research issues, in addition to those with which it dealt. These issues emanate from both the internal QoL analysis and the external QoL analysis, as well as from the integration of these perspectives.

The data used in the external QoL analysis focused on one particular sub-group of the lone parent population, i.e. lone parents residing alone with dependent children. However, a substantial minority of the lone parent population with dependent children do not reside alone (15% - see row 1 of table 4.7). Thus, there is a need to specify any significant differences between these two groups of lone parents. This would inform as to whether or not it is advisable to use the data on lone parent households (with dependent children) as representative of the overall lone parent population (with dependent children). In the thesis, the extent to which these groups differ in their QoL outlook is discussed within 8.3.1c.

However, this raises a broader issue; what extent are there differences between lone parents in terms of their QoL? Indeed, is it justifiable to talk of a *lone* parent QoL? This is a fundamental issue which questions the validity of all subsequent analysis. Chapter seven examines the validity of the concept of a lone parent QoL on the basis of the results from the LPQoL questionnaires.

The inconsistencies between the results of the internal and external QoL analyses must also be examined in greater depth. In the thesis, this will be approached by explaining the response patterns to internal QoL (chapters 8 & 9). As has been demonstrated, the LPQoL questionnaire results permit an estimation of whether car owning lone parents are more satisfied with transport. Similar questions can be raised for housing and economic activity levels.

A myriad of research questions are raised from the internal QoL results. For example, why are economic issues less important than social concerns, when so much of the lone parent population experience poverty? Why are so many lone parents strongly satisfied with their family life when they are so commonly portrayed by others as an inferior family unit? The questions generated from the components of QoL are raised at appropriate junctures throughout the remainder of the thesis.

The temporal changes in overall QoL also require fuller attention. Most importantly, the strongly positive outlook of most lone parents requires explanation, especially without any indication that the lot of lone parents will improve in years to come. Furthermore, the geographical variations in QoL must be explained as cause or effect (or both). Migration patterns have a crucial explanatory role; do lone parents migrate into areas of deprivation or is the rate of lone parent migration higher in such areas? Temporal issues are given fuller consideration in chapter ten.

The original research agenda has been supplemented on the basis of the patterns of QoL reported within this chapter. This extended agenda lays the foundation for a more comprehensive analysis of lone parent QoL. This first such issue to be addressed is perhaps the most important, i.e. to what extent is it justifiable to refer to a lone parent QoL?

CHAPTER SEVEN

A LONE PARENT QUALITY OF LIFE?

7.1 INTRODUCTION

" People become lone parents in different ways, and they therefore experience lone parenthood differently. "

Millar & Bradshaw (1987, p.233)

It is not uncommon to categorise present-day lone parents in terms of their route into lone parenthood, i.e. previous marital status. Demographic (e.g. Haskey 91) and socio-economic studies (Jenkins 90) have highlighted the differences between widowed, never married, separated and divorced lone parents, thus providing support for Millar & Bradshaw's argument on the experience of lone parenthood. The logic of this analysis (personal character influences, or at least, surrogates for experience) can be inverted, i.e. do experiences validate the social grouping? Or, in the context of the thesis, is the QoL experienced by lone parents sufficiently consistent to validate discussion of a *lone parent* quality of life? Is 'lone parent' a meaningful sub-population? Of course, the 'validity' of lone parent QoL analysis could be defended on pragmatic grounds. Much of the argument within the introductory chapters of the thesis suggests that it is valid to research and conceive of a lone parent quality of life, e.g. the reader's attention has been drawn to the *prevalence* of lone parenthood (1.2.2, 2.3.1), the common *characteristics* shared by lone parents (Table 4.7) and the *provisions* made for lone parents in the social policy arena (2.6). However, these insights do not validate the concepts which the thesis addresses (lone parent QoL). That is, these pragmatic concerns do not deal directly or explicitly with the *experience* of lone parents.

In this chapter, the validity of the concept of a lone parent QoL is assessed. This is approached in two ways. First, the *internal validity* is estimated, i.e. is there consistency of opinion among lone parents or would it be more satisfactory to discuss the QoL of sub-types[1] of lone parents (such as divorced, separated, widowed, or never-married as suggested by Bradshaw & Millar above)? Second, the *external validity* is estimated, i.e. do lone parents as a whole differ significantly from other socio-population groups? Beforehand, the analytical procedures are described and explained.

7.1.1 ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE

The chapter commences as a study of (lone parent) QoL, rather than a search for sub-types of lone parent (categorised according to their QoL). While both approaches consider the same relationships, e.g. comparing the self-evaluated life quality of *male* lone parents with that of *female* lone parents, the preference is for the former which treats QoL as the response (dependent) variable and personal characteristics as explanatory (independent) variables. The aim is to explain differences in QoL and not to *categorise* lone parents.

It is anticipated that there will be variation within the lone parent population. However, if this variation is *marked* then it suggests that explanation may be more meaningfully pursued for sub-types rather than for the whole. Thus, specification of key sub-types can serve as a first step towards the ultimate goal of explanation (thereafter, explanation would be pursued for *each* sub-type in turn).

A two-stage analysis was administered to assess the *internal validity* of the lone parent grouping (re QoL); this is described in 7.1.1a and 7.1.1b, which corresponds to sections 7.2 and 7.3 of the chapter. The procedure to gauge the *external validity* of the lone parent grouping is described in 7.1.1c, which corresponds to section 7.4.

7.1.1a Internal Validity Stage 1 : Extent Of Differences

The distribution of QoL opinion is examined at the domain and overall QoL levels. A dominant lone parent opinion and/or limited variation from the lone parent norm would support the generic lone parent grouping., i.e. where there is more evidence of similarity rather than variation among lone parents. To reach such a conclusion, graphical illustrations (Figure 7.1 to 7.4) of the QoL value distributions were produced, interpreted visually and, where appropriate, subjected to statistical analysis. It should be emphasised that it is the 'deviant' distributions (from the lone parent norm), i.e. patterns of extreme variation that is of concern; some variation is anticipated beforehand. General conclusions are drawn, as are more limited conclusions that apply specifically to the domain and overall QoL levels.

7.1.1b Internal Validity Stage 2 : Nature of Differences

Stage one considers whether sub-types are worthy of closer attention (whether there are differences of opinion that could conceivably be explained by the existence of meaningful sub-types within the lone parent population); in stage two, candidates for sub-type status are first specified, then assessed; these are defined according to profile characteristics of lone parents. Initially, these characteristics are posited as explanatory factors for QoL. At this stage, the analysis is extended to encompass sub-domain satisfaction and domain QoL, in addition to overall QoL, domain satisfaction and domain importance as in stage one.

SELECTION OF EXPLANATORY VARIABLES: Table 7.1 provides details of the variables that are used to explain QoL. There are fifteen categories of explanation (col. a) encompassing thirty-four sub-categories (col. b). In turn, nine of these sub-categories are represented by more than one dimension (col. c), e.g. participation in education (row h) is represented by school leaving age and the number of years in post-school education. Furthermore, twenty-six sub-categories have more than one classification scheme, e.g. the age of the lone parent (row a) is grouped into a five

Table 7.1
Explanatory Variable Definitions

GROUPS	THEMES (DIMENSIONS)	DEFINITIONS
A	B	C
a) **AGE OF LONE PARENT**		<24 25-9 30-4 35-9 >40 <30 30or>
b) **SEX OF LONE PARENT**		Man Woman
c) **MARITAL STATUS**		Divorced Separated Single Divorced Separated/Single Divorced/Separated Single
d) **DURATION OF LONE PARENTHOOD (YEARS)**		V. Recent Recent Long V.Long Recent Long
e) **CHILDREN** :	NUMBER	1 2 3or> 1 2or>
	FAMILY STRUCTURE (BY AGE GROUP)	Pre-School Pre-School&School School Post-School
		With < 5 Not with < 5
	(AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD)	Under 5 5 or older
	(PRESENCE OF CARER)	No Yes
	(INDEX OF HOUSEHELP AVAILABILITY)	V.High High Average Low V.Low High Average Low High Low
	(INDEX OF FAMILY EXPENSE NEEDS)	V.High High Low V.Low High Low
f) **EMPLOYMENT** (non house)	WORK STATUS	Working Not
	ECONOMIC STATUS	Active Inactive
	CLASS (OF WORKERS)	Prof/Manager/Skilled Other Prof/Manager Skilled Other
	CONDITIONS (HOURS/WK)	Part-Time Full-Time
	(DAYS/WK)	<2.5 2.5-4.5 >4.5 <2.5 2.5or>
	(SECURITY)	Permanent Not
g) **FINANCIAL** :	MAIN SOURCE OF INCOME	D.S.S. Maintenance Earning D.S.S. Earning
	MAINTENANCE ARRENGEMENT	Recipient Not A Recipient
	NATURE OF PROBLEM	Credit Income
h) **EDUCATION** :	PARTICIPATION (SCHOOL LEAVING AGE)	15 16 17or> 15/16 17or>
	(YEARS AFTER SCHOOL)	0 1 2or> 0 1or> 0/1 2or>
	HIGHEST ATTAINMENT LEVEL REACHED	Diploma Below Diploma
i) **HOUSING** :	TENANCY (IF NOT HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD)	Family Not Family
	SECTOR	Priv. L.Authority Indep. Private Not
	TENURE	Owner Renter
j) **TRANSPORT** :	NUMBER OF MODES USED (LOCAL)	1/2 3or>
	(DISTANT)	1/2 3or>
	SELF PROVISION OF NEEDS (LOCAL)	None Partly Self Fully Self Only Self Not
	(DISTANT)	None Partly Self Fully Self Only Self Not

continued overleaf

continued from previous page

GROUPS	THEMES (DIMENSIONS)	DEFINITIONS
A	B	C
k) LOCAL AREA :	% of LONE PARENT FAMILIES	Low Medium High Low High
	DEPRIVATION STATUS	W.A.Aver A.Aver B.Aver W.B.Aver Above Average Below Average
	RESIDE IN AN A.P.T.	Yes No
	LONE PARENT SUPPORT GROUP IN AREA	Yes No
	SETTLEMENT TYPE	Industrial Town City Other Industrial Town/City Other City Other(all)
	ADMININSTRATIVE AREA	Cunninghame Glasgow
l) MIGRATION :	reTRANSITION TO LP/HOOD (DURING SPLIT)	Migrant Not
	(DURING/SINCE)	Migrant Not
	RECENT HISTORY (WITHIN 5 YEARS)	Migrant Not
	(WITHIN 3 YEARS)	Migrant Not
	(WITHIN 1 YEAR)	Migrant Not
m) CHILDCARE :	NUMBER OF OPTIONS	0 1 2 3or> 0/1 2or> None Some
	SOURCES (MOTHER)	Main Subsiduary Not at all Yes No
	(OTHER RELATIVE)	Main Subsiduary Not at all Yes No
	(FRIEND)	Main Subsiduary Not at all Yes No
	(COUNCIL)	Main Subsiduary Not at all Yes No
n) PERCEPTION :	STATUS	Single Parent Not
	CHARACTER	Positively Negatively
o) SUPPORT GROUP :	MEMBERSHIP (CURRENT)	Member Not
	(EVER)	Current Ex-member Never Ever Never
	IF MEMBERS, TYPE OF GROUP	One-Plus Gingerbread Other One-Plus Gingerbread

Notes

various) or> - or more (e.g. 1or> = at least one)
d/e) V. - Very
g) D.S.S. - Department of Social Security
i) Priv. - Private
Indep. - Independent
L. - Local
k) W.A./A. - Well above / above
W.B./B. - Well below / below
A.P.T. - Area For Priority Treatment
l) LP/HOOD - Lone Parenthood

option variable (<24, 25-9, 30-4, 35-9 & 40+) and a two option variable (<30 & 30+). In total, eighty-five explanatory variables were used in the analysis (column c).

Each of these explanatory variables was incorporated in the analysis as they were hypothesised, a priori, to exert an influence on at least one aspect of QoL. Thus, for example, whether or not the respondent was a member of a lone parent support group was expected to be associated with how importantly they regarded advice & support, i.e. group members were expected to regard this as more important (hence their involvement with a support group), see 8.3.4d for further details. Low survey returns from some types of lone parent prevented some lines of enquiry from being developed, e.g. virtually no responses were received from non-white lone parents; therefore, ethnicity was excluded from analysis.

DEFINITION OF RESPONSE VARIABLES: QoL value distributions (response variables) were simplified to facilitate statistical analysis. These re-specifications were made on both a *conceptual* basis, e.g. categorising overall QoL values, as either below average or above average and on a *distributional* basis, e.g. collapsing overall QoL values into quartiles of highest, high, low & lowest. Table 7.2 provides details of all classifications used for response variables. As with the explanatory variables, multiple classifications were employed. In total, the six dimensions comprise of seventy-four individual parts (column d), which were divided into 293 separate variables (column d multiplied by column f).

APPLICATION OF STATISTICAL TESTS: Chi-square tests were administered to identify significant relationships, i.e. significant differences of QoL opinion between lone parents. Chi-square was an appropriate technique to use as both the explanatory and response variables were either nominal (categorical) or ordinal (ordered categorical). Chapter 4.5.1 gives details of how chi-square is interpreted; particular attention should be paid to the significance of the classification of the response variable on result interpretation (see Table 4.8 in 4.5.3b). In this chapter, the statistical significance of relationships that are of substantive interest are recorded on a matrix for each aspect of QoL (Tables 7.3 to 7.7).

INTERPRETATION OF STATISTICAL ANALYSIS: Table 7.8 ranks the most important explanations for QoL from Tables 7.3 to 7.6 (below aggregate level). If the QoL opinions between types of lone parent (e.g. between workers and non-workers) are consistently different, then this cleavage becomes a candidate for sub-type status; those characteristics will feature prominently within the summary table of 7.8. These possible candidates must then be critically evaluated. As for the generic (lone parent) group, the measure of validity is consistency of QoL opinion among members of the group. With the emphasis on synthesis and general conclusion, this analysis is only conducted at the aggregate (overall QoL) level.

UNIVARIATE SUB-TYPE EVALUATION: It transpires that economic status is the major cleavage in the QoL opinions of lone parents and that working and non-working lone parents are the primary candidates for sub-type designation (7.3.1e). Should both groups hold a distinctive (and internally consistent) opinion profile, then two sub-types have been identified; if only one holds a distinctive (and internally consistent) opinion profile, then one sub-type has been identified; if neither

Table 7.2
Response Variable Definitions

ASPECT OF QOL	EMPIRICAL MEASURE	SCALE OF ANALYSIS	NUMBER OF VARIABLES	VALUE RANGE	NUMBER OF DEFINITIONS	DEFINITIONS
A	B	C	D	E	F	G
a) Definition	Importance	Domain	14	1 to 5	3	QUAL : Very/Extremely:4-5 Less:1-2-3 : Not At All:1 A Little:2-3 A Lot:4-5 : Minimal:1-2 Quite:3 Very:4 Extremely:5
b) Evaluation	Satisfaction	Sub-Domain	30	-3 to +3	3	QUAL : Dissatisfied:-3-2-1 Satisfied:+1+2+3 : Dissatisfied: Neutral:0 Satisfied: : Very Dissatisfied:-3 Dissatisfied:-2-1 Neutral:0 Satisfied:+1+2 Very Satisfied:+3
c) Evaluation	Satisfaction	Domain	14	-3 to +3	5	QUANT : Thirds Quartiles QUAL : Dissatisfied:-3-2-1 Satisfied:+1+2+3 : Dissatisfied:- Neutral:0 Satisfied:+ : Very Dissatisfied:-3 Dissatisfied:-2-1 Neutral:0 Satisfied:+1+2 Very Satisfied:+3
d) Evaluation	Index of Quality	Domain	14	-35 to +35	6	QUANT : Halves Thirds Quartiles QUAL : Negative:<0 Positive:>0 : Negative:<0 Neutral:0 Positive:>0 : Very Low:<-7 Low:-6.5 to -0.5 Neutral:0 High:0.5 to 7.5 Very High:>8
e) Evaluation	Average QoL	Overall	1	-10 to +10	3	QUANT : Thirds Quartiles Quintiles
f) Evaluation	Index of Quality	Overall	1	-35 to +35	4	QUANT : Halves Thirds Quartiles QUAL : Negative:<0 Positive:>0

Notes : QUANT - Response variable definition defined on a distributional basis
QUAL - Response variable definition made on a conceptual basis

holds a distinctive (and internally consistent) opinion profile, then no sub-types have been identified. The first result would validate sub-type analysis, the third result would validate generic analysis, while the second result would demand a more detailed analysis, before either analytical approach is adopted. A pragmatic problem with the second result (one sub-type and a remainder of lone parents with no shared basis of opinion) concerns the extent to which subsequent analysis (under)represents the lone parent population. For example, it has been shown that 46% of lone parents surveyed are working within the labour market and that 54% are not (Table 4.7). thus, if sub-type based analysis of QoL opinions is pursued on the basis that *one* of these groups exhibit consistency of opinion, then the opinions of 46% of the survey population would be ignored, if non-workers were the sub-type, or 54% would be ignored, if workers were the sub-type, i.e. there is no place in the subsequent analysis for lone parents who do not belong to a sub-type. Clearly, it would be unacceptable to omit such a large proportion of the survey findings from the analysis. Consequently, if only one sub-type is identified, and the 'excluded' constitute a substantial proportion of the population under study, then generic analysis is preferable.

MULTI-VARIATE SUB-GROUP EVALUATION: However, were it found that either (or both) candidate(s) did not achieve sub-type status, then a second possibility must first be explored, i.e. that economically-based sub-groups (multi-variate, defined according to economic status in the first instance) are a more appropriate division. As before, the internal consistency of sub-group opinion is the key criteria. However, given that the multi-variate process involves a much greater degree of fragmentation of the generic lone parent population (see Figure 7.5), the issue of representation and exclusion becomes a more pertinent issue.

7.1.1d External Validity

The existence of a generic *lone parent* QoL outlook (assuming the internal validity analysis find evidence of one) is insufficient to claim that there is a *lone parent explanation* for these opinions. That is, these opinions may be shared with other parents, with other adults of similar ages, or with other adults, i.e. the lone parent character of QoL opinion may reflect lone parent membership of larger socio-population groups that include lone parents. In order to estimate whether this is the case, a control sample of the 160 partnered parents was surveyed (see 4.4.2 for an explanation of the control sample). Comparison is conducted for all fourteen aspects of domain importance and for nine aspects of sub-domain satisfaction.

7.2 MAGNITUDE OF DIFFERENCE

Is the extent of QoL differences among lone parents significant? This question is now answered for the aggregate (7.2.1) and domain (7.2.2) scales of analysis.

7.2.1 OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE

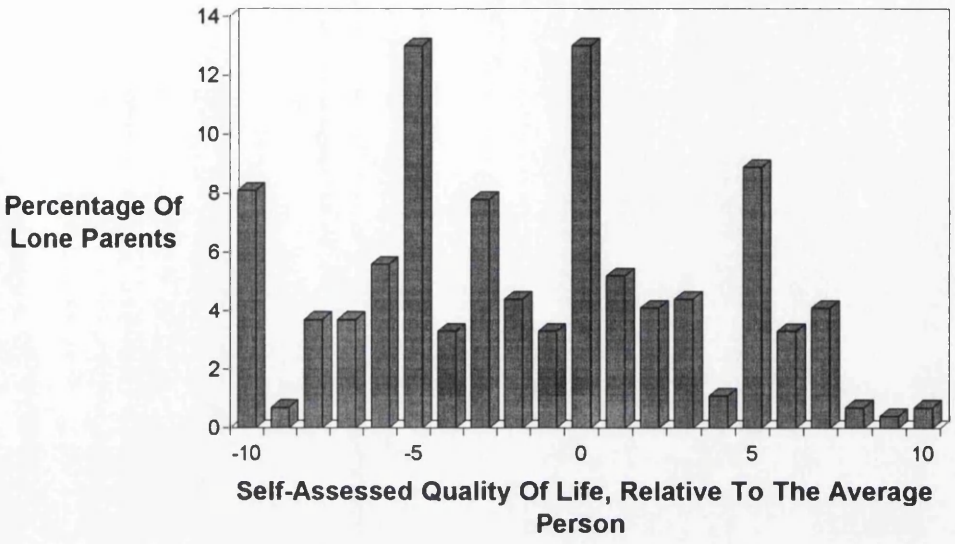
The distribution of lone parents' QoL opinion is presented in Figures 7.1 and 7.2. Clearly, the data lead to contradictory conclusions; the SMQoL results being suggestive of multiple lone parent experiences, the MAQoL demonstrating more similarity of response.

The SMQoL results are dominated by peaks at regular five point intervals (Figure 7.1), i.e. -10 (8.7% of lone parents), -5 (13%), 0 (13%) and +5 (8.9%). Other features of note are a fourth peak at -3 (7.8%), the sharp tail-off at the upper end of the scale and the similarity of response distributions between the major peaks. The peaked distribution is a reflection of the survey instrument used to generate these results (discussed in 10.2.1). More significant, is the broad distribution of values (self-evaluated QoL). This suggests that there is little empirical justification to treat lone parents as a social group (there are several groups *within* this generic category). However, in contrast, the responses for the MAQoL model in Figure 7.2 are characterised by a concentration of values around neutral. That is, most lone parents have a QoL that is neither markedly high, nor markedly low. This visual observation is reflected in the statistical summaries of the value distribution, i.e. the SMQoL model has a much greater variance statistic of 25.273, compared to the MAQoL model's value of 15.533^2. the lower variance value. This leads to the conclusion that for the MAQoL model, there is empirical justification for discussing a lone parent QoL. However, as with the single measure, the response distributions are partly a reflection of the nature of the survey instrument/analytical techniques used to generate the result (Figure 4.3).

Inconsistencies between the MAQoL model and the SMQoL model are of central importance to the thesis. Indeed, a comparison of results for the two models of QoL is undertaken in 8.2.2b and a comparison of the explanations for overall QoL is conducted in 9.2.1. For the present, it is sufficient to mention that apparent inconsistencies owe more to the nature of the survey instrument than to substantive variation. Thus, while the MAQoL model is suggestive of a generic lone parent QoL position, this conclusion cannot be confidently accepted. Similarly, the results of the SMQoL model which are suggestive of sub-types cannot be confidently rejected. The issue requires closer attention.

Figure 7.1

Lone Parents' Quality Of Life (Single Measure Model) : Response Distributions

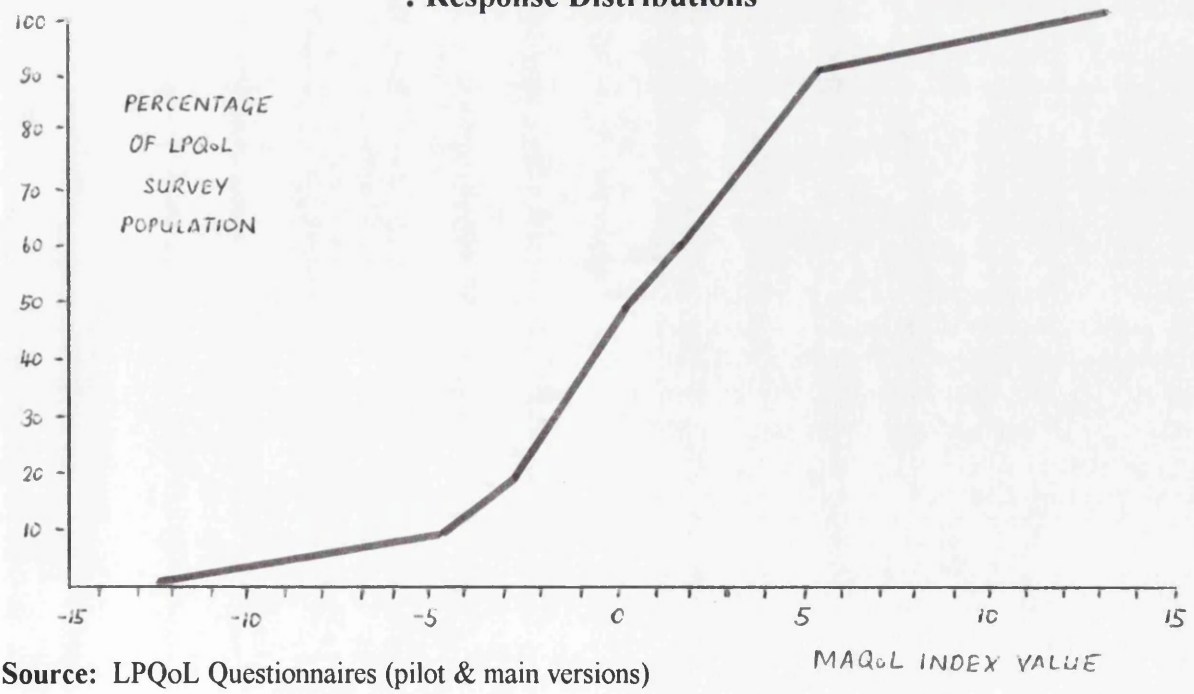


Source: LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)

Notes: Each lone parent rated his/her quality of life on a 21-point scale, ranging from -10 (way below average), through 0 (average) to +10 (way above average). The 'average' was that of the 'average person'.

Figure 7.2

Lone Parents' Quality Of Life (Multiple Additive Model) : Response Distributions



Source: LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)

Notes: see Figure 6.3 for mode of calculation

7.2.2 DOMAIN : DEFINITION OF IMPORTANCE & EVALUATION OF SATISFACTION

Figure 7.3 presents a series of histograms representing how importantly lone parents regard each. These are ordered according to the skewness of the distributions[3] starting with the most negatively skewed, i.e. the domain which more lone parents consider to be important. Figure 7.4 presents a similar series of histograms for domain satisfaction.

7.2.2a Definition Of Importance

As Figure 7.3 shows, there are some domains for which lone parents are in almost complete agreement as to its importance, e.g. virtually all lone parents consider family life to be 'extremely' important (Figure 7.3b). Nine domains can be classified as lone parent domains, i.e. domains in which a distinctive lone parent view emerges (Figures 7.3a to 7.3i). Of these domains, three profiles are prevalent:

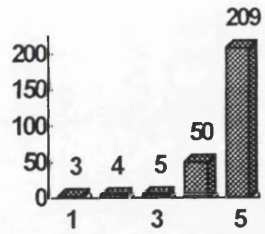
1) Domains for which there is overwhelming agreement on one response category (extremely important in each case), i.e. crime, family & control (Figure 7.3a to 7.3c).
2) Domains for which there is strong agreement on one category (extremely important) and a significant proportion in a similar category (very important), i.e. health, housing & financial situation (Figure 7.3d to 7.3f).
3) Domains for which there is a concentration in one category (extremely important) and significant proportions in two other similar categories (very important & quite important) i.e. opportunities, advice & support and services (Figure 7.3g to 7.3i).

Of the remaining domains, i.e. those where no dominant lone parent view emerges, there is a similar response pattern for three domains, i.e. work, transport & neighbourhood (Figure 7.3j to 7.3l), which are characterised by an even distribution across three response categories (extremely important, very important, quite important). Indeed, it may be more appropriate to treat these as domains with a lone parent position, given that there is a consensus (albeit broader-based). However, there can be no doubt that no lone parent view exists for the remaining two domains; while a majority consider leisure to be quite important (Figure 7.3n), the most significant point is the broad range of opinion. the breadth of opinion is even more characteristic for others' attitude toward them (Figure 7.3m); even here, though responses err toward one side of the continuum with lone parents tending to rate it less important.

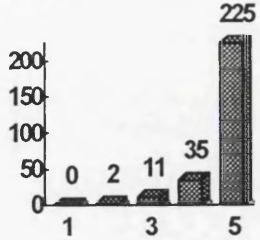
In conclusion, there is evidence of lone parent viewpoints. However, for leisure and others' attitudes, it is more appropriate to look at sub-types of lone parent. The most significant finding is that lone

Figure 7.3 : Importance Of Domains For Lone Parents : Response Distributions

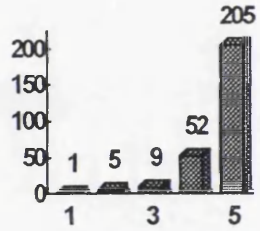
A) CRIME



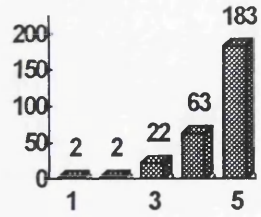
B) FAMILY



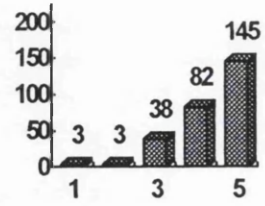
C) CONTROL OVER LIFE



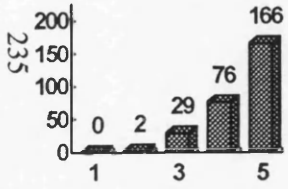
D) HEALTH



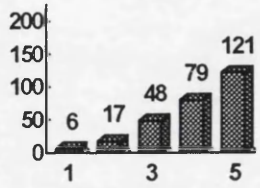
E) FINANCIAL SITUATION



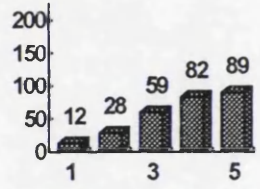
F) HOUSING



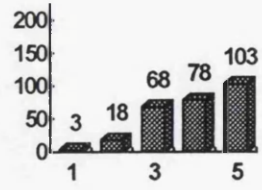
G) OPPORTUNITIES



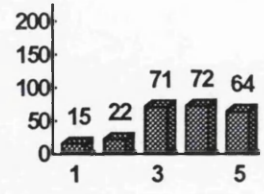
H) ADVICE & SUPPORT



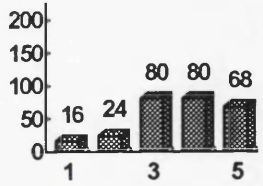
I) SERVICES



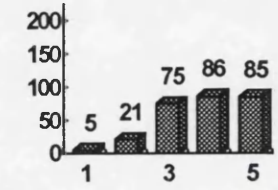
J) WORK



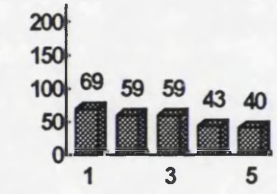
K) TRANSPORT



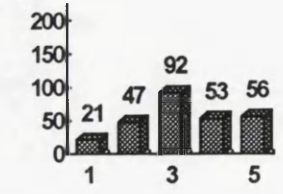
L) NEIGHBOURHOOD



M) OTHER'S ATTITUDE



N) LEISURE



VARIENCE STATISTICS

A)-3.007 B)-2.586 C)-2.474 D)-1.864
E)-1.275 F)-1.151 G)-0.983 H)-1.864
I) -0.597 J)-0.535 K)-0.520 L)-0.514
M) 0.257 N)-0.103

NOTE : See Table 7.1 for value definitions
: Values refer to the number of respondents

SOURCE : LPQoL Questionnaires

parents generally share the same opinion on the importance of domains; in terms of domain importance, it is valid to conceive of a lone parent outlook.

7.2.2b Satisfaction Evaluations

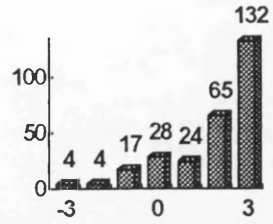
As for definition, there are those domains where there is much agreement among lone parents, e.g. family life (Figure 7.4a) and opportunities (Figure 7.4b) and others where a wide range of opinion is expressed, e.g. leisure (Figure 7.4n) and control (Figure 7.4m). Interestingly, the domain rank order in terms of the skewness of the value distribution (where a more skewed distribution represents more agreement among lone parents) is very similar; eight domains are within one rank position, i.e. where there is more evidence of a lone parent *view* on importance, it is more likely that lone parents will share a similar *experience*. The outstanding exception to this rule is work, where lone parents strongly agree that it is important, but where there is considerable variation in terms of satisfaction with work experience.

More generally, there is considerably less agreement among lone parents in terms of their satisfaction with domains. A visual comparison of Figure 7.3 and Figure 7.4 readily confirms the point. In classificatory terms, two 'lone parent' domains are evident, i.e. family life (Figure 7.4a) and opportunities (Figure 7.4b), while four others exhibit a broader-based lone parent consensus, i.e. health (Figure 7.4c), neighbourhood (Figure 7.4d) housing (Figure 7.4e) & financial situation (Figure 7.4f). However, there is no evidence of a 'lone parent view' for the remaining majority of eight domains (Figure 7.4g to 7.4n). in terms of domain satisfaction, it is *less* valid to conceive of a lone parent position.

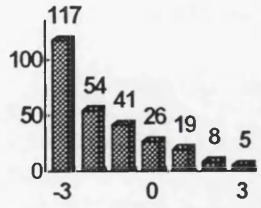
In conclusion, systematic review of the QoL response distributions at the aggregate (7.2.1) and domain (7.2.2) levels has not vindicated one particular side of the lone parent/sub type polemic. Thus, there have been as many indications of a generic lone parent QoL position (MAQoL and domain importance) as there have been challenges to such a position (SMQoL and domain satisfaction). This general conclusion is also replicated at the specific domains level, where a dominant lone parent position on family life emerges (extremely important and a source of satisfaction to lone parents), in sharp contrast to the variety of views expressed over leisure and others' attitude. The analysis now turns to examine the nature of variation in QoL opinion among sub-types, in an attempt to overcome the inconclusiveness of this numerical review.

Figure 7.4 : Domain Satisfaction For Lone Parents : Response Distributions

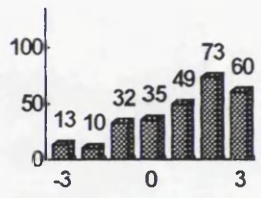
A) FAMILY LIFE



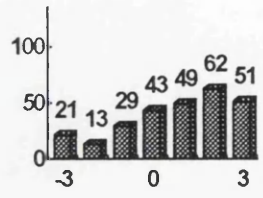
B) OPPORTUNITIES



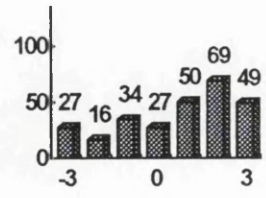
C) HEALTH



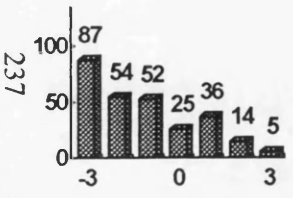
D) NEIGHBOURHOOD



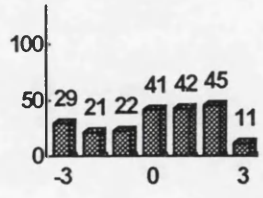
E) HOUSING



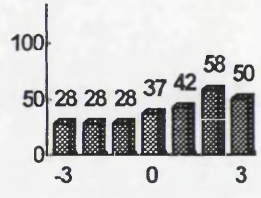
F) FINANCIAL SITUATION



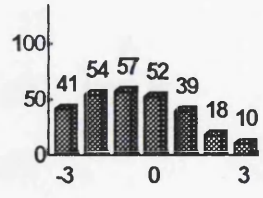
G) ADVICE & SUPPORT



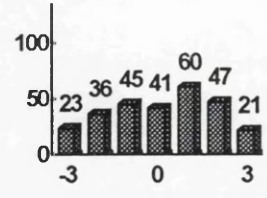
H) CRIME



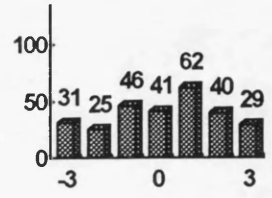
I) OTHER'S ATTITUDE



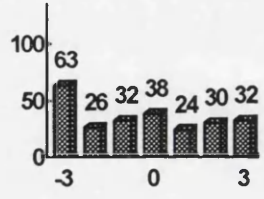
J) SERVICES



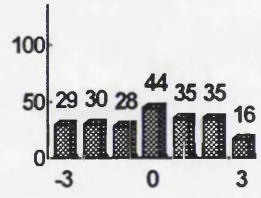
K) TRANSPORT



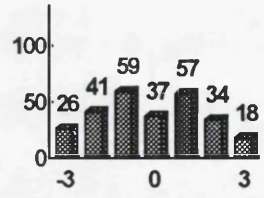
L) WORK



M) CONTROL OVER LIFE



N) LEISURE



VARIENCE STATISTICS

A) 0.023 B)-0.075 C) 0.181 D)-0.188
E) 0.194 F) 0.249 G)-0.340 H)-0.369
I) 0.544 J) -0.547 K)-0.581 L)-0.620
M) 0.899 N)-1.121

NOTE : See Table 7.1 for value definitions
: Values refer to the number of respondents

SOURCE : LPQoL Questionnaires

7.3 NATURE OF DIFFERENCES

Do those numerical patterns in 7.2 which were suggestive of variation, reflect *real* differences among the lone parent population, i.e. are there *real* sub-types of lone parent, or are they merely the outcome of chance distributions? To answer this question, the basis of QoL opinion is now explored. The analysis is conducted for five aspects of QoL i.e. domain importance, satisfaction with QoL at the sub-domain & domain levels and the QoL experienced at domain level & aggregate levels. Explanatory variables that exert a broad influence across several domains (below aggregate QoL), or a particularly strong influence for overall QoL, would provide evidence against the generic lone parent classification, i.e. where there is consistent evidence of a particular division it may be more useful to conceive of the lone parent population (and to analyse their QoL) according to the elements of this divide (variates of the variable).

Tables 7.3 to 7.7 detail the strength of the relationship between profile characteristics (explanatory variables) and dimensions of QoL (response variables). The numbers within the table reflect the strength of the association, i.e. the higher the number, the higher the probability level at which the association can be confidently asserted. Table 7.8 synthesises the data from Tables 7.3 to 7.6 (below aggregate level) to rank the most important explanatory variables, i.e. those influencing the widest range of domains. For each explanatory factor, details are provided of the number of significant associations at the 95% probability level and the number between 95% and 90% probability level. On the basis of these results, a candidate for sub-type status is proposed; this claim is subjected to critical analysis in 7.3.2.

7.3.1 CLEAVAGES IN LONE PARENT QOL OPINION

7.3.1a Definition Of Importance

It has been shown that lone parents tend to share the same opinions over the importance of life concerns (7.2.2a & Figure 7.3). Thus, it is less likely that there will be a consistent cleavage among lone parents in terms of domain importance. However, it is now posited that if an explanatory variable influences the QoL outcome of the majority of domains, then the possibility that the lone parent population would be more appropriately divided according to variates of this variable, should be considered. Table 7.3 demonstrates that only one domain fulfils this criteria, i.e. the education status, measured in terms of participation (associated with ten domains, seven of which are significant at the 95% probability level); the nature of these differences of opinion are discussed in 8.3.1b. However, it is interesting to note that *participation* is the source of more differences among

Table 7.3
Lone Parent's View of Quality of Life
: Associations With Explanatory Variables

EXPLANATORY VARIABLES[1]	VARIATES[1]	X^2 SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS — IMPORTANCE OF DOMAINS												
		House	Comm	Crime	Family	Health	Money	Work	Leisure	Transp	Service	Support	Autitud	Opport	Control
Age				2			2				2				
Sex												2		1	
Status							1	1		2		1			
L.P. Duration															
Children	Number	3								2		2			
	Family Structure			2			2	1				2	2		1
Employment	Work status					2	2				2				
	Economic. Active			1		2	1				2			3	
	Class	2					2	4	1						
	Conditions				1			4						2	
Financial	Main Income					2		2			1	2		2	
	Maintenance												3		2
	Nature of Problem		2											2	
Education	Participation	2	2		3	1	2	1	2			1	4	4	
	Attainment	1	1	1	2		2			3	1		2		
Transport	Number														
	Self Provision	2		2	2		4				4	2		1	
Housing	Tenancy										1				
	Sector	1	1				5					1		2	2
	Tenure	2					4			2				2	2
Locational	Lone Parent			1	1				2	2			4	1	
	Deprivation				2			3			1		2		
	Settlement Type									1			2		1
	Admin. Area									2			2		
Migration	L.P. Transition	1				2	1						2		
	Recent History		1				1	3			2	2			
Childcare	Number		2										4		
	Type : Mother						1						4		
	Relative		2								1				
	Friend		2					2							
	Council													2	
View of Self	Status														
	Character														
O.P. Group	Membership	2		1				1		1	2	5	1		
	Identify With														

Source : LPQoL Questionnaire (pilot & main versions)

X^2 Significance Levels : 1 - 90-95% level
2 - 95-99%
3 - 99-99.5%
4 - 99.5-99.9%
5 - 99.9%

Notes : 1 - see Table 7.1 for definitions of explanatory variables (order of Table 7.1 maintained above)
2 - see Appendix 8 for definitions of response variables

lone parents than *attainment* (Tables 7.8). Furthermore, more generally, while socio-economic divisions are of the greatest significance (education ranks 1 & 4, transportation ranks 2 and housing ranks 3 & 8; see Table 7.8), it is interesting that the core economic divisions (work status, economic activity status and earning potential) possess relatively less explanatory power (not ranked, 10th and 6th respectively in Table 7.8). Thus, socio-economic 'products' (transport, housing) and, particularly, socio-economic related outlook (education) account for variations among lone parents, rather than economic resources. In conclusion, then, further attention must be given to the possibility that socio-economic outlook (as reflected by participation in education) is a cleavage that is more consistent than the generic lone parent category.

7.3.1b Evaluating QoL : Satisfaction at the Sub-Domain & Domain Levels

A comparison of Table 7.4 (explanations for sub-domain satisfaction) and Table 7.5 (domain satisfaction) highlights that there are relatively more significant associations (differences of opinion among lone parents) at the domain level. For example, the explanatory variable that exerts the broadest influence at both levels, i.e. work status, is significantly associated with only half of the variables at the 95% level for sub-domain satisfaction (15 of 30) compared to twelve from fourteen for the domain level.

However, in another important respect, the results for the two levels of analysis are remarkably similar (Table 7.8). That is, the most important explanatory variables are common to each; only one of the ten most important explanatory factors at the sub-domain level does not feature for the domain level, i.e. transportation. Likewise, of the eleven most important explanatory factors at the domain level, only the lone parent character of the locale and the number of childcare options do not feature for the sub-domain level. Indeed, these anomalies are among the least significant of the explanatory variables.

Family structure is the only characteristic whose explanatory power differs significantly according to the specificity of QoL. That is, family structure is more able to explain QoL at the domain level (significant differences of opinion are found for 8/14 domains, in comparison to only 8/30 sub-domains). In a limited sense, this demonstrates the importance of the specificity when interpreting QoL data.

However, the immediate concern is to specify candidates for sub-type status. Without question, the economic status of lone parents is the major cleavage among lone parents. In particular, work status exerts the broadest influence at both levels of analysis; being significantly associated with 50% of the sub-domains and with 85% of the domains. Beyond the economic, the character of the local area is also a key explanatory factor, ranking fourth and third for the sub-domain and domain levels respectively. However, when weighing up the case for sub-types, sight must not be lost of the potential of all those characteristics which feature on both lists, i.e. marital status, family structure, housing sector, housing tenure and education participation.

Table 7.4
Lone Parents' Satisfaction At Sub-Domain Level : Associations With Explanatory Variables

EXPLANATORY VARIABLES[1] / VARIATES[1]	X^2 SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS																														
	SUB-DOMAINS (Indicators of satisfaction)																														
	HOUSING			COMMUNITY		CRIME	FAMILY		HEALTH		MONEY	WORK			TRANSPORT			SUPPORT		OPPORTUNITY											
												Yes	No		LEISURE			SERVICES			OTHER			CONTROL							
	Condition	Appearance	Neighbourhood	Spirit	Safety	Vandalism	Childcare	Support	Doctor	Source	Support	Control	Variety	Travel	Pay	Place	Activity	Facility	Spare	Provision	Shopping	Local	Community	Total	Total	Gov.	Child	Family	Income
Age		3							2			2	5																		
Sex				2																							1				
Status		5		2	1		2				2			1				2	2				4	2		2	2	1		
L.P. Duration				1		2			1	1										1		2									
Children Number	1			2			2	2				2			4	2			1				2							2	
Family Structure	3	1		2	4				2	1		2			4			5	1		1		2			1				
Employment Work Status	5	5		2	4	5		5	4	2		5						5	1	2	4	4	1	5	1			4		
Economic. Active	4	2		2	2	2		2	2			5						5		2	4	2	2	2	1	1		3		
Class												3						1												
Conditions				1						2		2																1		
Financial Main Income	4	1			4	2		2	2	4		5	3					2			2	2	1	5				2		
Maintenance	1	2			2			1				2							4											
Nature of Problem						1						1					1													
Education Participation		2	1			1	2			1	2	2			1		2	4					2	3			1	3		
Attainment	1	1						1	1	2								2				1					2	1		
Transport Number																															

		HOUSING			COMMUNITY		CRIME		FAMILY		HEALTH		MONEY		WORK Yes		WORK No		LEISURE		TRANSPORT		SERVICES		SUPPORT		OTHER		OPPORTUNITY		CONTROL	
		Condition	Appearance	Neighbour	Spirit	Safety	Vandalism	Child Dr.	Support	Doctor	Source	DSS	Lving Cost	Cond. Tm.	Trvl Time	Prosp. Tm.	Len. Trng	Spare Time	Facilities	Public	Safety	Provision	Shopping	Local Env.	Comm. Grp	TOL. Pts.	TOL Scale	Gov. Action	Child Care	Fear Crime	Int. Locale
Transport	Self Provision	4	5		1		4			1	2	2	3									2				2	3				
Housing	Tenancy	2											1						2									2			
	Sector	1	4		2		5	2	1	1	5		4					2			1		1			2	5	2		1	
	Tenure	4	4		1		4	1	1	1	5		4					1			2		2	1			5	3		1	
Locational	Lone Parent		5				5				2									1					4	2	4		4	2	
	Deprivation	4	5				3			2	4	2									2	2	2				5	2			3
	Settlement Type		2							1	2	2					2										5				
	Admin. Area			4							2		1															2			
Migration	L.P. Transition											1					2	1	2	2											2
	Recent History	1												3					1			1			2						
Childcare	Number					2	2		2			1										3		4	4		2		1	1	
	Type : Mother	1			1				5		1			2						3				2	1						
	Relative			1				2	3		2				1					1	2	1		1			1	1			
	Friend			2				1	5	2				2									2			2					
	Council												1					1											4		2
View of Self	Status	1	1				2				1		2								2						3	2			
	Character																														
O.P. Group	Membership	2	2				2				2		4				1		3						2		5				
	Identify With	1										1														1			1		

Source : LPQoL Questionnaire (pilot & main versions)

X^2 Significance Levels : 1 - 90-95% .. 2 - 95-99% .. 3 - 99-99.5% .. 4 - 99.5-99.9% .. 5 - 99.9% level...

Notes : see Table 1 for definitions of explanatory variables

Table 7.5
Lone Parent's Satisfaction At Domain Level
: Associations With Explanatory Variables

EXPLANATORY VARIABLES[1]	VARIATES[1]	X^2 SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS: DOMAIN SATISFACTION[2]													
		House	Comm	Crime	Family	Health	Money	Work	Leisure	Transp	Service	Sport	Autitud	Opport	Control
Age		4		2		2	4	3							
Sex			1										2		
Status		3	2	4	3			3		4					4
L.P. Duration			1												
Children	Number	1			2		1		4			2	3		
	Family Structure	5		2	2	3	3	3					2		2
Employment	Work status	5	2	5	2	5	5	5	1	2	2	5	2		2
	Economic. Active	4	1	5		3	5	5		1	1	5	1	2	
	Class	1					2								
	Conditions		2				2								2
Financial	Main Income	5		4		4	5	5			1	5	4	2	2
	Maintenance			2		1	4	4	1		2				
	Nature of Problem						2								
Education	Participation					2	4	1	1				5	2	5
	Attainment	1				4	2	2							4
Transport	Number														
	Self Provision	4	2	4		2	4		1						
Housing	Tenancy	2		1			2	1				3	4		
	Sector	4		3		5	4	4					5		
	Tenure	4		4		5	4	5			2		5		
Locational	Lone Parent	2		5		2					1	3		4	1
	Deprivation	5		2		5		1		2	4		5	2	3
	Settlement Type	1	2		3	1							2		
	Admin. Area				4									2	
Migration	L.P. Transition								3						2
	Recent History	1	1	1		1	2				1				
Childcare	Number			1	2	2	2					5		3	2
	Type : Mother											1			
	Relative				2	3		2		1		2		2	
	Friend				4		1				1		1		
	Council	1			1										
View of Self	Status	2		1			3	3							
	Character														
O.P. Group	Membership	1				2	1				1		3		
	Identify With	1					1				3				

Source : LPQoL Questionnaire (pilot & main versions)

X^2 Significance Levels : 1 - 90-95% level
2 - 95-99%
3 - 99-99.5%
4 - 99.5-99.9%
5 - 99.9%

Notes : 1 - see Table 7.1 for definitions of explanatory variables (order of Table 7.1 maintained above)
2 - see Appendix 8 for definitions of response variables

7.3.1c QoL at Domain Level

The domain QoL indexes are the product of QoL evaluation (domain satisfaction) and QoL definition (domain importance) of QoL (Figure 4.3). It is found that the key explanatory variables for domain QoL (Table 7.6) are remarkably similar to those for domain satisfaction (Table 7.5). This confirms two points suggested in the previous chapter, i.e. domain QoL contributes little to an understanding of QoL and domain QoL is largely the product of domain satisfaction (given that similarities between the key explanatory variables for these are particularly evident).

However, differences among working lone parents, expressed in terms of social class, are found to be a key explanatory factor for domain QoL, but not for domain satisfaction nor domain importance. The difference that social class makes is taken up in 8.3.1a, but presently, it serves to prove that domain QoL *does* contribute something unique, albeit in a limited fashion, to an understanding of QoL.

7.3.1d Overall Quality of Life

Table 7.7 identifies the key explanatory variables for overall quality of life; the table consists of different measures of the same phenomenon (unlike Tables 7.3 to 7.6, which are based on the same measure of different phenomena), i.e. the explanations for the SMQoL model (col. d) are listed alongside those for the MAQoL model (col. c). The explanations are broadly comparable, although there are four significant differences;

1) '*Family Structure*' registers as significant at the 99.5% probability level for the SMQoL model, but is insignificant for the MAQoL model.
2) Deprivation status registers significant at the 99.5% level for the MAQoL model, but is insignificant for the SMQoL model.
3) Age registers significant at the 99.5% level for the MAQoL model, but only at the 90% level for the SMQoL model.
4) More variables register as significant for the MAQoL model.

As was mentioned earlier, the differences in explanation between the two models of overall QoL will be examined in 9.2.2. Here, the similarities are used to suggest possibilities for sub-type status, i.e. explanations that feature for both models of overall QoL are more likely to be the root of significant differences among the lone parent population. In particular, work status, housing status and previous marital status feature strongly as explanations for QoL in both models; work status registers significant at the 99.9% probability level in both. Other candidates, which register significant differences of opinion at the 95% probability level in both models are education status (attainment), transport status and the lone parent character of the area. Quite clearly, the aggregate

Table 7.6
Quality of Domain Life : Lone Parents
: Associations With Explanatory Variables

EXPLANATORY VARIABLES[1] VARIATES[1]		X^2 SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS QUALITY OF DOMAIN LIFE												
		House	Comm	Crime	Family	Health	Money	Work	Leisure	Transp	Service	Support	Autrd	Oppor	Control
Age		4		2		2	4	2							
Sex			2												
Status		4		2	2		1		3	3					4
L.P. Duration									2						
Children	Number				2		1		4		3	2			2
	Family Structure	4		2	2	4	2	2				1		1	
Employment	Work status	5		5	4	5	5	5		2	3	5	4	1	2
	Economic. Active	4		5		4	5	5		1	4	5	3	2	
	Class	2		4		4	2	5					2		
	Conditions		1				2								2
Financial	Main Income	5	1	4		5	5	5			1	5	4	1	2
	Maintenance		1	2		1	3	3	1		1				
	Nature of Problem		2												
Education	Participation				4	3	3	2					5	2	5
	Attainment	2				5	1	1				1			4
Transport	Number								1						
	Self Provision	4		2		3	4			2	1				
Housing	Tenancy	1					3	1					3	1	
	Sector	2		2		5	4	4					5		
	Tenure	4	1	2		5	4	3					5		
Locational	Lone Parent	4	2	4		3		1				2		4	1
	Deprivation	5	1	2		5	2	1		2	4		4		
	Settlement Type	2			4	2	2						2		
	Admin. Area		2		5	1	1	1							
Migration	L.P. Transition							1	5		1				2
	Recent History		2			1	2				1				
Childcare	Number	1			2	1						5		1	2
	Type : Mother				1							4			
	Relative				2	4				1		2		2	
	Friend				5	1	1								
	Council	1			1		2							4	
View of Self	Status	2		2			2	2					2		
	Character														
O.P. Group	Membership	1				1	1						3		
	Identify With								1		3				

Source : LPQoL Questionnaire (pilot & main versions)

X^2 Significance Levels : 1 - 90-95% level
2 - 95-99%
3 - 99-99.5%
4 - 99.5-99.9%
5 - 99.9%

Notes : 1 - see Table 7.1 for definitions of explanatory variables (order of Table 7.1 maintained above)
2 - see Appendix 8 for definitions of response variables

Table 7.7
Lone Parent's Overall Quality of Life
: Associations With Explanatory Variables

EXPLANATORY VARIABLES[1]	VARIATES[1]	X^2 SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS	
		MODEL OF QUALITY OF LIFE Multiple Additive	Single
Age		****	*
Sex			
Status		****	*****
L.P. Duration			
Children	Number	*	*
	Family Structure		****
Employment	Work status	*****	*****
	Economically Active	*****	*****
	Class	**	
	Conditions		
Financial	Main Income	*****	*****
	Maintenance	**	
	Nature of Problem		
Education	Participation	**	*
	Attainment	**	**
Transport	Number		
	Self Provision	**	**
Housing	Tenancy		**
	Sector	***	****
	Tenure	****	****
Locational	Lone Parent	**	****
	Deprivation	****	
	Settlement Type		*
	Admin. Area		
Migration	L.P. Transition		
	Recent History	*	**
Childcare	Number	**	
	Other Relative		
View of Self	Status		
	Character	*	***
O.P. Group	Membership	*	
	Identification With		

Source : LPQoL Questionnaire (pilot & main versions)

X^2 Significance Levels : * - 90-95% level
** - 95-99%
*** - 99-99.5%
**** - 99.5-99.9%
***** - 99.9%

Notes : 1 - see Table 7.1 for definitions of explanatory variables

analysis raises the possibility of displacing the generic lone parent basis from the centre of this study of QoL.

7.3.1e Synthesis Toward A Hypothesis

Table 7.8 provides a means to compare all aspects of QoL below the aggregate level, while Table 7.7 presents equivalent data for overall QoL. Clearly, the major cleavage is between the economically advantaged and the economically disadvantaged. Thus, work status exerts the broadest influence for sub-domain satisfaction, domain satisfaction & domain QoL and the strongest influence on overall QoL lone parents, while income status and economic status feature prominently for each of these components and are also among the list of key explanatory variables for domain importance. First and foremost, therefore, the examination of sub-types should be based on economic advantage versus economic disadvantage.

But which of these measures of economic status should be used to explore the relative advantages of sub-type/generic bases of analysis? In qualitative terms, each emphasises a particular aspect of economic status (Table 7.1f & 7.1g and Table 7.9):

1) *Income Based*: distinguishes between those whose main source of income is paid employment and all others (who include part-time workers supplementing welfare payments).
2) *Economically Active*: expanding the classification of economically advantaged to group all earners together.
3) *Work Status:* adopting an even broader definition of 'economically' advantaged, whereby voluntary workers are grouped with workers.

There is no reason why either of these should be used in preference over the others. Thus, a quantitative basis of selection is adopted using Table 7.9 which compared response patterns for overall QoL. As was noted in 7.1.1b, it is the consistency of opinion *within* each sub-type that is important and not the degree of difference between sub-types, i.e. with respect to Table 7.9, the economic variable that is selected should be the one for which more of the economically disadvantaged have a low QoL *and* where more of the economically active have a higher quality of life; this is not necessarily equivalent to the economic variable in which the greatest degree of difference between the economic advantaged and disadvantaged is recorded[4].

For economic advantage, the results are comparable for the MAQoL model (col. c, e & g). However, in the SMQoL model, earners (col. g) are found to agree more with each other (a higher proportion have a high QoL), compared to the economically active (col. e) and workers (col. c). In contrast, for economic disadvantage, non-workers agree more with each other in both models of overall QoL (a higher proportion have a low QoL), compared to the economically inactive and non-earners. the choice therefore is between work status and income status, between which no clear advantage emerges. Consequently, other factors were introduced to aid the decision-making. Work status was finally selected as a greater proportion of the survey respondents provided details of their work status (Table 7.9) and that work status, more than any other characteristic, is most closely associated with lone parents' QoL at each level of analysis (Table 7.7 & 7.8).

Table 7.8
Lone Parent Quality of Life : Most Important Explanatory Variables

Rank of Importance / Explanatory Variable[1] / No. with Significance 95% / No. with Significance 90-95%

SUB-DOMAIN SATISFACTION			DOMAIN SATISFACTION			DOMAIN QOL			DOMAIN IMPORTANCE		
A	B	C D	E	F	G H	I	J	K L	M	N	O P
1.	Work Status	15:3	1.	Work Status	12:1	1.	Work Status	11:1	1.	Educ. Partciptn	7:3
2.	Econ. Active	15:2	2.	Main Income	9:1	2.	Econ. Active	9:1	2.	Trans. Self-Prov.	6:1
3.	Main Income	13:2	3.	Loc: Deprivation	8:1	3.	Main Income	8:4	3.	Housing Tenure	5:0
4.	Loc: Deprivation	12:0	4.	Family Structure	8:0	4.	Loc: Deprivation	7:4	4.	Educ. Attainment	4:4
5.	Housing Sector	10:6	5.	Econ. Active	7:4	5.	Housing Tenure	6:0	5.	Family Structure	4:2
6.	Marital Status	10:3	6.	Marital Status	7:0	6.	Educ. Participtn	7:0	6.	Main Income	4:1
7.	Housing Tenure	9:5		Housing Tenure	7:0	7.	Loc: Lone Parent	6:2	7.	OP Group Member	3:4
	Educ. Participtn	9:5	8.	Number Childcare	6:1	8.	Marital Status	6:1	8.	Loc: Lone Parent	3:3
9.	Trans. Self-Prov.	9:2	9.	Housing Sector	6:0		Family Structure	6:1		Housing Sector	3:3
10	Family Structure	8:2	10.	Educ. Participtn	5:2	10.	Class of Workers	6:0	10.	Econ. Active	3:2
				Loc: Lone Parents	5:2		Housing Sector	6:0		Mig: Recent History	3:2

Source : LPQoL Questionnaire (pilot & main versions)

Abbreviations : Econ. - Economic
Educ. - Educational
Trans. - Transport
Self-Prov. - Self Provision

Notes : see Table 7.1 for definitions of explanatory variables

Thus, the hypothesis to be examined is whether the work status of lone parents provides more appropriate bases for the analysis of QoL (i.e. working lone parents *and* non-working lone parents) compared to the generic lone parent analysis. Should this hypothesis fail to be confirmed, then the possibility that multivariate sub-groups would be a more appropriate basis of QoL analysis should be explored (7.1.1b). A review of Tables 7.7 and 7.8 highlight four further cleavages which may be used to construct multivariate sub-groups, were it established that sub-type based explanation was a fruitful avenue to pursue, i.e. if economic status proves itself to be a meaningful division among lone parents (sub-type), then the possibility that sub-group specification (bivariate or multivariate) would enhance this understanding should be explored. Thus, family structure, education status, housing status and marital status, which feature prominently among the explanations for each aspect of QoL may perform a useful supplementary role in enhancing the classification. The extent to which these divisions actually constitute sub-types/economically-based sub-groups is examined in 7.3.3.

7.3.2 ECONOMIC STATUS : *THE* CLEAVAGE AMONG LONE PARENTS?

The economic character of lone parents is a major cleavage in terms of the QoL opinion (Table 7.9). However, a close reading of this table suggest that the case for disaggregating lone parents into economic sub-divisions may be unwarranted. As was noted above (7.3.1e), sub-types must be defined on the basis of shared opinion among group members and not differences of opinion with other groups. Thus, for example, not only must workers differ from non-workers; there must also be a basis of agreement among workers. Yet, as Table 7.9 shows, there is no conclusive evidence for consistency among the economically advantaged. That is, the majority of the economically advantaged in the MAQoL model are of a similar opinion, i.e. 71% of workers experience a QoL above the lone parent average, in the SMQoL model, less than one-half of workers claim an above average QoL (48%). Clearly, there is no consensus of opinion in the SMQoL model. However, there is a clear majority opinion among non-workers with 68% perceiving a below average QoL in the SMQoL model and 64% experiencing a QoL below the lone parent average in the MAQoL model. Thus, despite expressing a higher QoL than non-workers, there is no real consensus among workers; the possibility of a sub-type of economically advantaged lone parents should be rejected.

Indeed, with almost two out of every five non-working lone parents experiencing a QoL *above* the lone parent average (MAQoL model), i.e. in stark contrast to the majority of lone parents who don't work, it could be argued that this 'minority' experience is too large to be dismissed as an anomaly.

Thus, on paying close attention to the experiences of lone parents, it has been shown beyond doubt that working lone parents should not be used as a basis to explore QoL and that considerable doubts can be raised over the utility of using the category of non-working lone parents in this way. However, the possibility that the economic status of lone parents in this way. However, the possibility that the economic status of lone parents is but one component of a multivariate sub-*group* within the generic lone parent population is a final possibility that should be considered before

Table 7.9
Lone Parent Quality of Life By Economic Characteristics

QUALITY OF LIFE	ECONOMIC PROFILES Percentage Self-Rated QoL For Economic Status					
	Economically Active					
Level of Self-Rated QoL	Worker				Earner	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
A /B /	C	D	E	F	G	H
a) SINGLE MEASURE						
Below Average	36	68	36	62	30	64
Average	16	12	14	12	12	12
Above Average	48	20	50	27	59	24
CASES	230		275		275	
b) MULTIPLE ADDITIVE MODEL						
Below Average	29	64	28	55	27	55
Above Average	71	36	72	44	73	45
CASES	227		272		265	

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)

reaching a decision on the best way to proceed with the analysis of QoL for the lone parent population.

7.3.3 ECONOMICALLY-BASED MULTIVARIATE SUB-GROUPS OF LONE PARENTS : THE MOST APPROPRIATE BASIS FOR QOL ANALYSIS?

Is the sub-group (multivariate) a more appropriate basis for QoL analysis than the sub-type (univariate, i.e. economic) or generic (lone parent) alternatives? Table 7.10 works with education status, family structure, housing tenure and previous marital status to answer this question. These four variables were also (in addition to economic status) found to make a substantial contribution to the explanations of QoL opinion. Earning status is used in preference to work status as a greater number of respondents provided details of this aspect of their economic status; it is important to begin with a high number of cases as the multivariate sub-group process classificatory involves sub-dividing the aggregate into ever smaller sections. How far does the specification of bivariate sub-groups enhance the consistency of QoL opinion exhibited for the univariate economic sub-types?

Table 7.10
Lone Parent Quality of Life By Co-Variate Profiles : Age, Education Participation Tenure & Previous Marital Status With Economic Activity

COVARIATE PROFILE	PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT SURVEY POPULATION FOR EACH COVARIATE PROFILE: Self Rated Quality of Life (TO AVERAGE) BELOW	ABOVE	%CHANGE ABOVE	CASES
AGE				
Non-Earner	60	40		
Non-Earner aged under 30	67	33	-7	93
Non-Earner aged 30 plus	52	48	+8	88
Earner	30	70		
Earner aged under 30	37	63	-7	19
Earner aged 30 plus	27	73	+3	63
EDUCATION				
Non-Earner	60	40		
Non-Earner, no P/S educ.	62	38	-2	136
Non-Earner, P/S educated	46	55	+15	22
Earner	30	70		
Earner, no P/S education	29	71	+1	45
Earner, P/S educated	18	82	+12	22

	Self Rated Quality of Life (TO AVERAGE) BELOW	AVERAGE	ABOVE	%CHANGE ABOVE	CASES
TENURE					
Non-Earner	64	12	24		
Non-Earner, Cncl tenant	66	12	22	-2	131
Non-Earner, Indep. tenant	65	6	29	+5	17
Non-Earner, Priv. tenant	53	16	32	+8	19
Earner	30	11	59		
Earner, Council tenant	43	7	50	-9	42
Earner, Indep. tenant	0	17	83	+24	6
Earner, Priv. tenant	14	14	71	+12	28
PREVIOUS MARITAL STATUS					
Non-Earner	64	12	24		
Non-Earner, Single	64	19	17	-7	69
Non-Earner, Separated	64	13	22	-2	45
Non-Earner, Divorced	67	4	30	+6	57
Earner	30	11	59		
Earner, Single	20	20	60	+1	15
Earner, Separated	55	14	32	-27	22
Earner, Divorced	23	8	69	+10	39

Source : Pilot & LPQoL Questionnaires
Legend : Priv. - Private Indep. - Independent Housing Sector
P/S - Post School educ. - education
: %CHANGE - Change in Co-variate from basic economic for above average QoL.

First, it is clear that covariate profiles lead to improved internal consistency of QoL outlook (compared to a univariate basis of analysis). As the fourth column of Table 7.10 shows, the subdivision of economic status by each of the four variables, led to a greater proportion of earners with a higher QoL and a greater proportion of non-earners with a lower QoL. For example, while 59% of earners considered that they had an above average QoL (MAQoL model), the proportion of earners *who were divorced* with an above average of QoL was notably greater at 69%. Similarly, while 60% of non-earners considered that they had a below average QoL (SMQoL model), the proportion of non-earners *who were aged under thirty* with a below average QoL was markedly higher at 67%. These results confirm that each of the four variables has an independent effect on the QoL outcome (see chpt. 9 for more details).

The greatest consistency of covariate opinion is evident for educated, earning lone parents (high QoL) and young, non earning lone parents (low QoL). For the former, 82% share the same QoL opinion (that they experience an above average QoL), while 67% share the same QoL outlook for the latter (they experience a below average QoL).

Are these results sufficient to validate a sub-group basis of QoL inquiry for lone parents? As was noted in the previous section (7.3.2), internal consistency and numerical incidence are the two criteria that must be fulfilled. In reaching a conclusion, recognition must be made of the different types of covariate profile contained within Table 7.10. First, there are those which lead to *increased* consistency of opinion; where the two variates which are most closely associated with a QoL outcome are paired together. These covariate profiles comprise of younger, less educated, council tenants, single/separated lone parents *who are* non-earners (leading to a lower QoL) and older, educated, private sector tenants/divorced lone parents *who are* earners (leading to a higher QoL). The remaining covariate profiles (reversing the pairs from above) lead to a decrease in the consistency of QoL opinion.

Even where there are marked improvements toward an increased consistency of QoL opinion, there is evidence of substantial divergence from the majority opinion. Most notably, the most consistent opinion for non-earners (who are under thirty years of age), still omits one-third of non-earners (who considered that they had an above average QoL). Indeed, this rises to 38% for non-earners who are not educated (yet consider that they have an above average QoL). Thus, while there are increases in the consistency of QoL opinion, these are not of a sufficient scale to overcome this 'problem' (for validating sub-group based analysis).

Compounding these problems of consistency of opinion are the problems of improving consistency for only a minority of the lone parent population. The former may have been overcome by further subdividing the lone parent population (e.g. from age & earning status to age, earning status & education status), but the latter warns that to do so would be a pointless exercise (too many of the population would be omitted from the analysis that would follow). These numerical problems are evident for each variable, i.e. one-third of the lone parent population (non-earners over thirty) are as likely to have an above average QoL as there are to have a below average QoL; while this is considerable consistency of opinion for educated, earners (82% experience an above average QoL),

this group comprise only 10% of the lone parent population; similarly, private sector tenants who earn the majority of their own income comprise only 12% of the lone parent population & earners who are divorced comprise only 16% of the lone parent population. Indeed, there are little improvements in the consistency of opinion for tenure status and to a lesser extent previous marital status, in the fist instance.

Thus, the results clearly point to the conclusion that it would be inadvisable to analyse one parent QoL through covariate profiles, or to pursue this line of enquiry further by assessing the utility of other multivariate profiles. That is, the analysis of lone parent QoL is best pursued by examining the cleavages of opinion among the whole lone parent population. The generic basis of analysis begins in the next chapter of the thesis.

7.4 OUTLOOK ON QUALITY OF LIFE : LONE PARENTS AND PARTNERED PARENTS COMPARED

The previous section of this chapter has concluded in favour of a lone parent QoL. But what is the wider significance of this conclusion? Is it a *lone* parent conclusion, or does it reflect something more general? To address this question, the QoL opinions of lone parents are compared to those of partnered parents; definitions of QoL (importance ratings for fourteen life domains) and evaluations of QoL (satisfaction with eight sub-domains) are compared across both populations. If the results for partnered parents are comparable to those for lone parents then this implies that there is nothing inherently *lone* parent about the thesis' findings. Particular attention is paid to the QoL measurements relating to family life.

7.4.1 DEFINING QOL : THE IMPORTANCE OF LIFE CONCERNS

Table 7.11 clearly demonstrates that lone parents and partnered parents share a similar outlook on life. Similarities are evident in terms of the relative importance of domains (rank order of domains according to importance) and the absolute importance (proportion of the population who rate a domain 'very important').

Lone and partnered parents largely agree as to the relative importance of domains. For ten of the fourteen domains, the rank order for partnered parents varies by one (at the most) from the rank of lone parents. For example, housing is the fifth most important domain for lone parents (col. a), but the fourth most important domain for partnered parents (fourth highest mean in col. f). Thus, in general, the same hierarchy of domain importance is shared by all parents. There are four exceptions to this rule, i.e. where there is a difference of more than one rank position, i.e. neighbourhood (relatively more important to partnered parents), advice & support (relatively more important to lone parents), transport (relatively more important to partnered parents) and opportunities (relatively more important to lone parents).

In absolute terms, the similarities are even greater, with twelve of the fourteen domains characterised by a difference of less than ten per cent when the measure is the proportion of the population who rate a domain very important. These exceptions are, once again, advice & support (13% more lone parents rate this very important) and opportunities (19% more lone parents rate this very important). Smaller differences are also evident for transport & work (more important to partnered parents) and leisure, financial situation & others' attitude (more important to lone parents).

Thus, there are only two domains for which the differences between partnered and lone parents are evident in both absolute and relative terms, i.e. opportunities and advice & support. Interestingly,

Table 7.11
Views Of Quality Of Life, Domain Importance
Lone Parents & Partnered Parents Compared

MEAN VALUE RANK	DOMAIN	PERCENTAGE VERY/EXTREMELY IMP. (Lone)	(Part.)	MEAN (Lone)	(Part.)	CASES
A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Family Life	95.2	98.7	4.769	4.774	(159)
2	Crime	98.2	96.9	4.690	4.728	(158)
3	Control over Life	94.5	91.1	4.673	4.408	(157)
4	Health	90.4	92.5	4.555	4.594	(160)
5	Housing	88.6	92.4	4.487	4.478	(159)
6	Financial	83.6	77.1	4.339	4.146	(157)
7	Opportunities	73.8	55.0	4.077	3.601	(158)
8	Service Provision	67.0	70.4	3.983	3.824	(159)
9	Neighbourhood	62.9	66.3	3.827	3.837	(160)
10	Advice & Support	63.3	50.3	3.770	3.465	(159)
11	Work	55.7	61.3	3.607	3.703	(155)
12	Transportation	55.2	61.0	3.587	3.736	(159)
13	Leisure	40.5	35.7	3.283	3.250	(160)
14	Other Peoples' Attitude	30.7	21.1	2.726	2.595	(158)

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (Pilot & Main versions) and 2PQoL Questionnaire

Additional Information : Importance evaluations were made on a 5-point rating scale.

Key : A - Rank of E (mean importance for lone parents)
C & D - Proportion of lone parents rating a domain to be at least 'very important', i.e. 4 or 5 on the rating scale.
E & F - Mean value for each domain
G -Number of partnered parents who expressed an opinion.

Notes : Part. - Partnered Parents

these results first support, then deny, the public perception of lone parents. Thus, the finding that lone parents value advice & support more highly than partnered parents seems to reaffirm the perception of the 'dependency' of the lone parent unit, i.e. without the support interventions of the welfare system, lone parents would not be a viable family unit. Yet, just as soon as this (mis)perception has been 'confirmed' than further results challenge this assumption. That is, far from being satisfied with their lot, lone parents are more concerned (more than partnered parents) with opportunities to better themselves. indeed, the link between these aspects of lone parents' lives should not pass unnoticed, i.e. without the advice & support of others, lone parents are less able to capitalised on the opportunities which enable them to better themselves. Subsequent analysis in the thesis (chpt. 8 & 9) should pay particular attention to these two issues, which are *more* relevant to lone parents (vis-à-vis partnered parents).

7.4.2 EVALUATING QOL : SATISFACTION WITH LIFE CONCERNS

In sharp contrast to the shared opinions for domain importance, lone parents and partnered parents differ significantly in their actual experience of life. Table 7.12 demonstrates that for each aspect of life that was considered, lone parents were less satisfied than partnered parents. Several points are worthy of further comment.

The most significant findings to arise from this analysis are those relating to family life. Despite the very high levels of satisfaction expressed by lone parents even more partnered parents are satisfied with family life. This is particularly notable for the evaluations of interactions with family who live locally; almost 20% more partnered parents are satisfied (col. c & d, Table 7.12). Thus, there is nothing unique about the high levels of family satisfaction experienced by lone parents (Table 6.7). Indeed, if anything, the high aggregate satisfaction of lone parents can be misleading where the results are not set against a broader comparative context.

It is also important to consider those domains which lone parents consider to be *more* important compared to partnered parents. Indicators for opportunities and advice & support demonstrate that lone parents are *less* satisfied. The majority of partnered parents are dissatisfied with the amount of childcare provided locally (indicator for opportunity); however, even more lone parents were dissatisfied. Similarly, while partnered parents were neither predominately satisfied nor dissatisfied with the range of community groups in their area (indicator for advice & support), lone parents were mainly dissatisfied.

Finally, there is one difference that is significant by virtue of its size alone, i.e. satisfaction with the amount of spare time available to the parent. Twice as many partnered parents are satisfied with this aspect of their lives (71.8% compared to only 37.1% of lone parents). Clearly, the time pressure faced by lone parents, reflecting their sole responsibility for family matters, is an area worthy of further investigation. For geographers, the implications of this time-pressure in terms of the time-space geography of lone parenthood is an area worthy of further investigation.

Quite clearly the results point to substantial differences between lone parents and partnered parents; a *lone* parent QoL exists with regard to this aspect of QoL.

Table 7.12
Views Of Quality Of Life, Satisfaction With Sub-Domains
Lone Parents & Partnered Parents Compared

MEAN VALUE RANK	SATISFACTION INDICATOR	PERCENTAGE SATISFIED (Lone)	(Part.)	MEAN (Lone)	(Part.)	CASES (Part)
A	B	C	D	F	G	H
1	Relationship with Children	92.1	98.2	2.395	2.731	(160)
2	Family Support in area	72.5	89.5	1.515	2.268	(142)
4	Relation with Neighbours	69.8	77.1	1.177	1.739	(157)
7	Employment Conditions	63.2	78.2	0.830	1.317	(101)
12	Physical condition of house	54.7	67.9	0.487	1.031	(159)
19	Amount of spare-time	41.7	71.8	-0.235	1.013	(156)
21	Community Groups in area	27.8	43.3	-0.433	0.000	(129)
27	Local Childcare Provision	23.8	38.9	-1.223	-0.437	(126)
28	Employment Prospects	17.6	29.3	-1.239	-0.353	(51)

Sources : LPQoL Questionnaire (Pilot & Main versions) and 2PQoL Questionnaire

Additional Information : Satisfaction evaluations were made on a 7-point scale, ranging from -3 to +3.

Key : A - The rank importance of each sub-domain for lone parents (of all 30 sub-domains that were considered, see Table 6.7)
C & D - Proportion who are satisfied with the sub-domain
F & G - Mean value for each sub-domain
H - Number of partnered parents who expressed an opinion.

Notes: Part. - Partnered Parents

7.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has dealt with an important conceptual issue, i.e. the extent to which it is valid to conceive of a lone parent QoL. At the outset, the pattern of QoL responses was examined to assess whether there is (sufficient) variation in lone parents' QoL; such variation would admit the possibility of significant divisions within the generic group (7.2). While there was considerable agreement among lone parents as to the importance of domains (7.2.1) & the MAQoL model of overall QoL, there was sufficient variation in terms of domain satisfaction (7.2.2) & the SMQoL model of overall QoL to warrant further analysis. In examining the nature of variation in QoL opinion, it was found that, in contrast to the assertion of Bradshaw & Millar (see opening quote of chapter), previous marital status was not the key determinant of lone parents' experiences. Rather, as the multi-level review of 7.3.1 demonstrated, economic status is most closely associated with QoL. Even so, it was shown that it is more appropriate to maintain the generic basis for QoL analysis (to examine differences among lone parents), rather than adapt a sub-type basis (examining differences for working lone parents and non-working lone parents), or indeed, a sub-group basis (involving a multivariate classification); the improvement in consistency of opinion were minimal and the approach was less comprehensive in its coverage of the lone parent population. Finally, lone parents' QoL experiences were compared to those of partnered parents (with some notable exceptions), but lone parents are much less satisfied than partnered parents on each of the life concerns that were considered. the degree of this difference is such that it is valid to assert that there is a *lone* parent character to the QoL opinions reported by the LPQoL survey population. The evidence presented within the chapter leads to the conclusion that the concept of a lone parent QoL is internally and externally valid. Confident with this concept, the thesis now turns to explain why lone parents experience the QoL that they do.

CHAPTER EIGHT

EXPLAINING LONE PARENTS' QUALITY OF LIFE

: BIVARIATE ANALYSIS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Thus far, the thesis has reported lone parent's views on quality of life (hereafter, QoL) and has evaluated whether it is appropriate to conceive of a lone parent QoL (chpt. 6.4 & 7). While significant (statistical and substantial) differences of opinion were observed, these were insufficient to reject a *'lone parent'* analysis, in favour of a series of analyses based on sub-types of lone parent[1].

In this chapter, the nature of these differences of QoL opinion among lone parents are described and discussed. The questions are posed thus: What is the QoL for a given characteristic of a lone parent? For example, are younger or older lone parents more likely to perceive that they experience a high QoL? What is the wider significance of the findings? What policy implications can be drawn from them? The first issue is addressed for all significant differences of opinion, the others are discussed where appropriate. The only exception to these guidelines is where the life concern is thematically related to the sub-type, e.g. comparing how satisfied lone parents from different sectors of the housing market are with housing, or comparing how important work is between lone parents who are employed and those who are not; the nature of such relationships is interesting regardless of the statistical significance of the relationship and consequently each case is reviewed. A comprehensive account of QoL is provided for each characteristic, i.e. definition & evaluation of QoL at domain level are discussed, in addition to overall QoL. This chapter serves three important functions:

1) It is the logical stage between the basic descriptions of QoL in chapter six, the counts of significant QoL relationships per profile characteristic in chapter seven and the multi-variate explanations of QoL that are to follow (chapter nine). Thus, the nature of significant (bivariate) relationships are elaborated, before being placed within a general (multivariate) explanatory framework. Using the example of age from the previous paragraph, the reasons why (and implications of the fact that) more older (compared to younger) lone parents perceive that they experience a high QoL (8.3.2a) are examined in more depth than is possible within the summary analysis of overall QoL in 9.2.2.
2) Attention is focused upon the significance of being a particular type of lone parent, across the broad range of life concerns that were researched. For example, why more younger lone parents consider their financial position & services to be important while, in contrast, more older lone parents consider crime to be important, is discussed within one section of the thesis (8.3.2a). This compliments the life-concern basis of chapter nine and ensures that no general insights, pertaining to sub-types of lone parent, are overlooked.
3) Population groups are frequently referred to in terms of sub-types, e.g. younger lone parents, never-married lone parents, working lone parents. This is also the level at which most policy initiatives are targeted, e.g. the Child Support Agency was established to seek maintenance

payments on 'behalf of' lone parents in receipt of income support[2]. Thus, a focus on sub-types of lone parent is of particular practical value.

However, before interpreting the empirical results, the relationships between definition (importance) & evaluation (satisfaction) of QoL at domain level (e.g. importance of housing against satisfaction with housing) and between the multiple additive measure of QoL (hereafter MAQoL model) & the single measure of QoL (hereafter SMQoL model) are each considered.

For the domain level analysis, the aim is to establish whether or not those aspects of life which are most important to lone parents, are also the ones with which they are most satisfied. Confirmation of such a relationship would imply that profile characteristics only help explain part of the variations in QoL opinion. Two modes of analysis can be used to address this issue, i.e. the aggregate basis (comparing the survey population mean for importance, with the survey population mean for satisfaction) and the individual basis (pairing the satisfaction and importance ratings of each respondent and examining the contingency table of the 'paired ratings' for the lone parent population). As is demonstrated in the chapter (8.2.1), both approaches must be used to attain an comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the two components of domain QoL.

For overall QoL, the search for measurement error is the focus of analysis. Given that both models (SMQoL and MAQoL) purport to measure overall QoL, the results should be comparable. Findings to the contrary would require a re-appraisal of the models.

Clearly, the two issues to be examined in section 8.2 are of fundamental conceptual importance and must be addressed prior to empirical analysis. Introductory comment must also be made regarding the interpretation of the survey results and the manner in which they are reported in this chapter. The analysis establishes whether one category of lone parent (e.g. young lone parent) is significantly (see 4.5.3a for a discussion of significance) more likely than another (i.e. old lone parent) to hold a particular QoL opinion (e.g. satisfaction with housing); it does not seek to compare average opinions. For example, the results lead to the conclusion that more older lone parents are satisfied with their housing conditions and not to the conclusion that older lone parents are more satisfied than younger lone parents (8.3.2a). The latter is occasionally used to describe the results, as it is a less cumbersome form of description. However, the reader should acknowledge that the former is the more accurate interpretation (see 4.5.1 for a discussion of interpreting QoL data). It should also be emphasised that the QoL results, refer only to the internal component of QoL, i.e. the subject's experience of her/his own QoL. As above, the text is simplified to improve readability. Thus, 'older lone parents *experience* a higher QoL compared to younger lone parents' is used in preference to 'older lone parents *perceive than they experience* a higher QoL compared to younger lone parents'.

8.2 INTER-RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MEASURES OF LIFE QUALITY

8.2.1 COMPONENTS OF QUALITY OF LIFE AT DOMAIN LEVEL

The Lone Parent Quality of Life (hereafter LPQoL) questionnaire (Appendix 4) asked respondents how important fourteen aspects (domains) of life are to them (definition of QoL) and how satisfied they are with each, using two representative indicators (evaluation of QoL). Thus, the survey provides an opportunity to consider the inter-relationship between the definitional (importance) and evaluative (satisfaction) components of QoL for each of the fourteen domains surveyed. Few QoL projects involve both components (Pacione 82) and, of those which do, the evaluative dimension tends to be externally-derived, i.e. it is not the opinion of the respondent (see 4.1.2b for a discussion of why more QoL research should adopt an internal basis for measuring the evaluative component of QoL). The key issue is whether it is generally the case that the most important domains are those with which people are most satisfied.

8.2.1a Aggregate Level Analysis

While the concept is problematic (4.5.1a), 'average QoL' provides the means through which the relationship between satisfaction and importance can be understood. In Figure 8.1, mean domain importance ratings (from Table 6.6) are expressed in the form of Figure 6.2 (mean domain satisfaction). Both scale lines are of the same length and each represents the response range for its component of QoL. Thus, the satisfaction scale line ranges from -3 to +3 and the importance scale line ranges from +1 to +5. The further the domain is to the right hand side, the more important that domain is to lone parents (upper line), or the more satisfied lone parents are with that domain (lower line). In general, there are two positive scenarios:

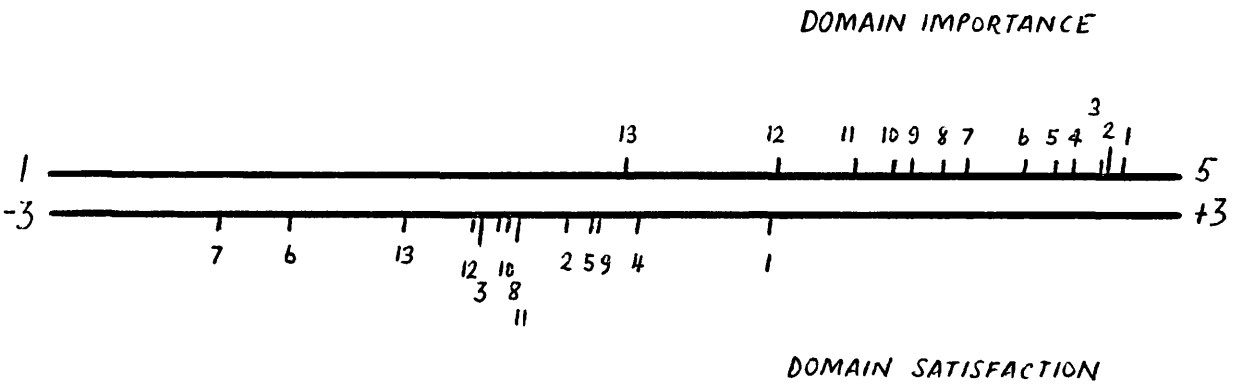
1) The most important domains are those with which lone parents are most satisfied, i.e. both satisfaction & importance are toward the right hand side of their respective lines in Figure 8.1.
2) The domains with which lone parents are least satisfied are those which are less important to them anyway, i.e. both satisfaction & importance are toward the left hand side of their respective lines in Figure 8.1.

Similarly, there are two negative scenarios:

1) The most important domains are those with which lone parents are least satisfied, i.e. to the right hand side of the upper line and the left hand side of the lower line in Figure 8.1.

Figure 8.1

Domain Importance By Domain Satisfaction : An Aggregate Analysis



Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions).
Notes: see text for explanations of scale lines.

2) The domains with which lone parents are most satisfied are not among their most important concerns, i.e. to the left hand side of the upper line and the right hand side of the lower line in Figure 8.1.

Three domains do not conform to any of these scenarios, i.e. transport, services and advice & support in that lone parents are neither markedly concerned/unconcerned nor satisfied/dissatisfied. Lone parents are satisfied with their neighbourhood, although this is of less importance to them, while for financial situation, work experience, opportunities and control over life, they are dissatisfied on an issue which is important to them (negative scenarios). For leisure and others' attitude lone parents are dissatisfied, although less concerned, while for crime, health, housing and family life, they are satisfied, while considering each to be very important (positive scenarios).

While these aggregate level empirical results raise important questions, these are not of immediate concern[3] (these are discussed later in this chapter in 8.3). Rather, their current significance is that they demonstrate that there is no *general* relationship between satisfaction and importance; quite clearly, relationships vary from domain to domain, with a wide range of experiences being registered. However, it is possible that the summary relationships of this aggregate analysis do not represent reality for the majority of lone parents, i.e. there may be a relationship at the individual level which is obscured on aggregation. This possibility must be addressed prior to conclusions being drawn.

8.2.1b Individual Level Analysis

Does satisfaction differ significantly between those who consider that a domain is less important and those who consider that it is more important? To address this issue, the definition/evaluation relationship is examined at the level of the individual (Table 8.1). Thus, for each domain, lone parents are portrayed as either satisfied or dissatisfied and of the opinion that it is either very important or not; this bivariate classification consists of four categories which correspond to those of the aggregate level scenarios discussed above. Column f denotes whether this relationship is (statistically) significant.

As column f of Table 8.1 shows, in general, these relationships are not significant. That is, those who consider a domain to be important are no more (or less) likely to be satisfied with their experience of that domain than those who consider it to be less important. The exceptional case is service provision, where lone parents who are more satisfied are (significantly) more likely to consider services to be of lesser importance. This is not of great substantive significance. For family life, those who are relatively less concerned tend to be less satisfied, but they are so few in number that minimum statistical criteria are not met and further deduction cannot be justified. This interpretation was not alluded to in the aggregate analysis, where it was obscured by the key finding that most lone parents are both satisfied and concerned with family life. Thus, the individual level results provide further confirmation that there is no general relationship between satisfaction and importance.

These individual level results can also be examined to assess how representative the average opinion profile is (8.2.1a and Figure 8.1) of the lone parent population (Table 8.1). The most typical opinion profile corresponds with the average opinion profile for housing (where the 'average' is experienced by 60.1% of respondents), crime (62.9%), health (70.6%) and, especially family (87.3%); each of which is important to, and a source of satisfaction for, lone parents. The 'average' also matches the 'typical' for financial situation (67.2% of respondents) and opportunities (66.4%); which are also among the most important concerns of lone parents, but, in contrast, are a source of dissatisfaction. To a lesser extent, the average and the modal coincide for others' attitude, where 45.6% of respondents hold the average lone parent view that they are dissatisfied with this aspect of life which is not important to them.

However, for other domains, the general trend is less typical of the lone parent population. For example, less than one-quarter (23.3%) of lone parents with transport are satisfied, although it *is not* an important aspect of their lives (the average experience), whereas over one third (33.9%) are of the opinion that transport *is* important and that they are satisfied with their experience of transport.

In conclusion, it has been shown that the average lone parent opinion profile is only an accurate representation of individual lone parents' outlook for one half of the domains. This is not to undermine the utility of either (or both) these levels of analysis; rather, they provide useful insights at different degrees of generality. A multi-scale analysis (individual & aggregate) is necessary to

Table 8.1
Domain Importance By Domain Satisfaction
: An Individual Level Analysis

Percentage of Lone Parent Survey Population With Each QoL Opinion Profile By Domain

DOMAIN	QoL OPINION PROFILE					
	IMPORTANCE SATISFACTION	Low Low	Low High	High Low	High High	Sign.	Cases
A		B	C	D	E	F	G
Housing		3.3	8.3	28.4	60.1		243
Neighbourhood		8.1	29.7	20.3	41.9		222
Crime		1.3	2.2	33.6	62.9		232
Family		2.0	2.9	7.8	87.3	0.0010*	244
Health		3.8	6.0	19.6	70.6		235
Financial Situation		10.2	5.3	67.2	17.2		244
Work		29.5	17.5	26.2	26.8		183
Leisure		33.6	26.2	19.7	20.5		229
Transport		19.8	23.3	22.9	33.9		227
Service		12.3	22.8	32.9	32.0	0.0331	228
Advice & Support		13.8	21.6	28.7	35.9		167
Others' Attitude		45.6	21.7	23.5	9.2		217
Opportunities		20.7	5.0	66.4	7.9		241
Control		1.8	2.9	48.5	46.8		171

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)
Abbrev.: Sign. Chi-Square statistical significance level
Legend * More than 20% of the cells have an E.F. of less than 5.
Notes : Low satisfaction is defined as those lone parents who rate themselves below average, high satisfaction is defined as those lone parents who rate themselves above average
: Low importance is defined as those lone parents who considered that a given domain was at most quite important ('1', '2' or '3' on a 5-point scale); high importance is defined as those lone parents who consider that a domain was either very important or extremely important ('4' or '5' on a 5-point scale).
: Significance refers to percentage distribution by categories (i.e. for each domain, comparing the satisfaction (high or low), of lone parents who consider that the domain is very important with the satisfaction of those who consider the domain not to be important. The data in columns b to e only report the percentage of the total lone parent population with each QoL opinion profile.

comprehend the distribution of opinion in terms of satisfaction and importance. The second major finding was that no general relationship between these assessments of domain QoL was found. First, average opinion profiles were identified from aggregate analysis from which it is readily apparent that the relationships varied between domains. Thereafter, a statistical test at the level of the individual, confirmed that there is no relationship (except for services) between importance and satisfaction. Rather, it is to the characteristics of the lone parents that attention should be turned to account for variations in satisfaction and importance (8.3)

8.2.2 MODELS OF OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE

In this section, two themes are addressed; the composition of the MAQoL measure of overall QoL (8.2.2a) and the consistency (or otherwise) between the MAQoL and the SMQoL models of overall QoL (8.2.2b).

8.2.2a Understanding The Multiple Additive Model Of Overall QoL

In the previous section, definition (importance) and evaluation (satisfaction) ratings were compared. The same data is now used to address another issue. Earlier, it was argued that in the MAQoL model, weighting satisfaction by importance provides a more realistic assessment of the contribution of each domain toward lone parent overall QoL, than satisfaction ratings alone (4.1.2b & 3.3.3a). Here, the two bases of measurement are compared to gauge the *empirical* difference that weighting makes.

Figure 8.2 compares the two bases of measurement which can be aggregated into a MAQoL model. As with Figure 8.1, the lines are of equal length and are scaled to represent full response ranges; the further the domain is to the right hand side, the more positive the contribution toward overall QoL. From this diagram, it can be seen that weighting makes no difference to the results. Both the rank positions and the value distributions of domains are virtually identical for unweighted satisfaction and weighted domain QoL.

Interestingly, this confirms the findings of the Glasgow Quality of Life Group who reported virtually no changes in relative QoL status when importance ratings were applied to raw performance indicators in their study of the largest cities in Great Britain (Rogerson et al 89b). Thus, while weighting is *theoretically* valid, *empirically* it makes little difference to the results of QoL studies. Despite the additional work involved, the MAQoL model adopted in the thesis incorporates weighting (on the grounds of theoretical validity).

8.2.2b Between Models of Overall QoL

As was described in 6.4.3, the MAQoL model is one of two estimates of lone parent's overall QoL arising from the LPQoL questionnaire (the second being a single measure, the SMQoL model). Any discrepancy between these two bases of measurement must be specified prior to empirical analysis. The degree to which the two models report the same QoL outcome can be assessed through Table 8.2 where QoL in the MAQoL model is compared to QoL in the SMQoL model. To facilitate comparison, response distributions were divided into quartiles.

Table 8.2
Consistency of Response Between Models Of Overall QoL

	Percentage of Lone Parent Survey Population With Each QoL Opinion Profile			
MULTIPLE-ADDITIVE MODEL OF QoL	SINGLE MEASURE MODEL OF QoL			
	Lowest	Low	High	Highest
A	B	C	D	E
Lowest	11.4	8.5	3.7	1.8
Low	4.4	8.8	7.4	4.4
High	4.0	7.4	4.8	8.1
Highest	1.5	3.3	9.6	11.0

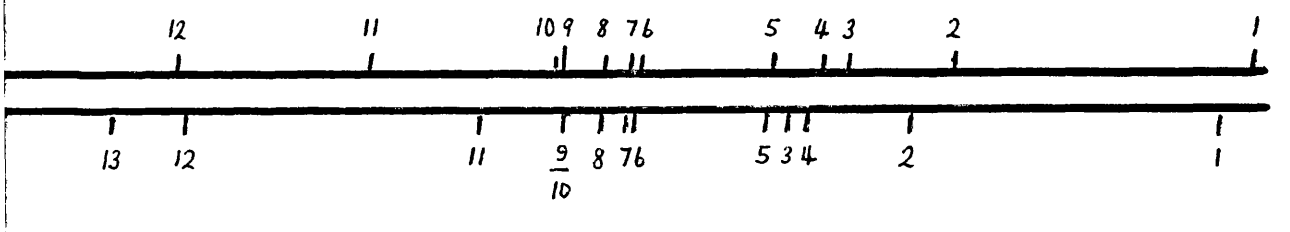
Source: LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)

Notes: All QoL distributions were classified into quartiles for the purpose of the analysis.

Cases: 275

Figure 8.2

Contribution Of Domains To The Evaluative Component Of Quality of Life In Multiple Additive Models : Domain Satisfaction And Domain Quality Of Life Compared



Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions).

Notes: see text for explanations of scale lines.

If the two measures are comparable, then it would be expected that the individuals with the highest QoL in the MAQoL model, would also have the highest QoL in the SMQoL model (and would therefore be found within the bottom right hand cell of Table 8.2). It is theoretically possible to have inconsistent individual level results disguised within 'consistent' aggregate-level results. However, once again, the results show consistency of response; 36% of lone parents are of the same QoL opinion (register in the same quartile group on both measures) which is more than three times the number who have widely differing QoL opinions (are found in the quartile group farthest removed from the left to right diagonal: 11.7%). The remaining (majority of) lone parents hold similar, but not identical, QoL opinions, i.e. 52% are found within one quartile group of each other.

What does this imply for the interpretation of the QoL results? Leaving aside the empirical evidence, it would be possible to posit logically consistent arguments in favour of one model of QoL at the expense of the other. For example, the claim that the 'sum equals more than the parts' could be made in favour of the SMQoL model, i.e. as the MA model evaluates QoL on a component-by-component basis, it omits intangible inter-relationships between, and beyond these components. Alternatively, it could be argued that the time-series context in which the SMQoL measurements were obtained could have influenced the nature of the response, i.e. the SMQoL evaluations may be relatively accurate (compared against other time periods) but they are not accurate in an absolute sense. However, the empirical evidence has reduced the significance of this debate in the present context. That is, the results are consistent across the two models. Nevertheless, this is still a matter of central significance to QoL researchers and one which will continue to generate debate. However, at this juncture, all indications are that the models of overall QoL that are used in the thesis are consistent, which instils confidence in the results which are now discussed.

8.3 LONE PARENT CHARACTERISTICS AND QUALITY OF LIFE

The variations in overall QoL opinion according to lone parent sub-types were considered in the critique of the concept of lone parent QoL in chapter seven. This analysis is now developed in two respects:

1) Previously, the strength of association and the number of significant relationships per profile characteristic were the main focus of interest; here, the substantive nature of the relationship is the central focus of concern.
2) Previously, only the substantive nature of the association between profile characteristics and overall QoL were considered; now, definitions & evaluations of QoL at domain level are also considered in this way.

First and foremost, the aim of this section is to report the nature of QoL for a given characteristic of a lone parent. As was noted in the introduction to this chapter, this is the level at which population groups are most commonly referred to; therefore, this is the level at which the QoL opinions of lone parents have most practical utility. For example, how satisfied lone parent householders (relative to those who share accommodation) are with their housing situation makes a useful contribution to current housing policy debates; expressions of dissatisfaction among householders would support the Government's proposed intervention that lone parents access to independent housing should be restricted (McKendrick 94). However, caution must be taken when attempting to progress beyond description to infer causal explanatory links on the basis of these relationships. For example, greater dissatisfaction with housing among lone parent householders would not necessarily be a direct result of their status as householders, i.e. it may reflect that those lone parents who are most likely to become householders are also more likely to be dissatisfied with their housing. That is, the bivariate relationships that are identified in this section may be the by-product of another explanation; conclusive interpretations can only be reached in the multi-variate analysis that follows (chapter nine). Thus, all causal interpretations of QoL relationships in this chapter should be read as preliminary accounts which will be verified (or otherwise) in chapter nine.

Fifteen explanatory variables are discussed, which are of four general types;

1) *Socio-Economic*, i.e. employment & financial, education, housing and transport.
2) *Demographic*, i.e. age, sex and family structure.
3) *Geographic*, i.e. settlement areas, deprivation characteristics and according to the lone parent character of area.
4) *Lone Parent Related*, i.e. duration of lone parenthood, childcare, previous marital status, perceived status, lone parent activism and migration.

8.3.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS

Explanations for QoL are most frequently traced to socio-economic circumstances (Gitmez & Morcol 94). It is anticipated that the lone parent population will be no different to other socio-population groups in this respect. Thus, it is the *extent* of difference between socio-economically 'advantaged' lone parents (e.g. workers, educated, owner-occupiers, car-owners) and socio-economically 'disadvantaged' lone parents (e.g. non-workers, uneducated, renters, non-car owners) that is particularly significant. Of course, as was demonstrated earlier (5.4.1e), there is considerable inter-relationship between lone parent's socio-economic characteristics; the findings for different aspects of socio-economic status will be broadly similar.

8.3.1a Economic

DEFINITION OF QoL: The employment status of lone parents is related to how important ten domains are considered to be, i.e. housing, control over life, health, work, support, opportunities, others' attitude, financial situation, leisure and services.

Work is the domain for which the greatest difference of opinion between the economically advantaged and disadvantaged is expressed. Interestingly, the basis of this difference is *between workers*, rather than between those who work and those who do not. That is, the majority of full-time workers (73%) rate the work that they do to be very important, whereas the majority of part-time workers do not (63%). Indeed, non-workers are as likely as workers to consider that work is an important aspect of their lives. Thus, lone parents who do not work, consider work to be more important than those lone parents who are working part-time. Clearly, opinions on the importance of work divides, rather than unites, the working lone parent population. It cannot be deduced whether this reflects economic factors (e.g. full-time workers earn a higher wage), workplace factors (e.g. full-time workers enjoy better working conditions) or symbolic factors (e.g. full-time workers consider themselves to be more attached to the labour market). What is indisputable is that the incorporation of lone parents into the margins of the labour market actually serves to lower their regard for the work that they do. Yet, under the British welfare benefit system and given projections of job creation in the near future, part-time work is and will continue to be, the main vehicle through which lone parents can improve their economic well-being .

Significant differences of opinion also exist over financial matters (another 'economic' domain) and for opportunities to better themselves ('economic' outcomes are influenced by the availability of such opportunities). More of those who work a shorter working week and more of those who are economically inactive, consider opportunities to be more important; the majority (67%) working more than two days per week only rate opportunities quite important, while the majority working for, at most, two days per week, rate them to be very important (71%). Furthermore, half of those lone parents who are economically inactive rate opportunities extremely important (50%) compared to

only one-third of the economically active (34%). Thus, the concern with opportunities is greatest among those who are not experiencing the economic gains that such opportunities bring. The notion of the satisfied lone parent on welfare is far removed from the actual attitudes of such lone parents; these are the lone parents who are keenest to improve their lot. Clearly, more sophisticated interpretations of lone parents' labour market strategies are required than the 'dependency thesis' that are currently favoured.

More non-workers consider their financial position to have an important impact on their life than workers; 45% of workers consider their financial position to be extremely important, compared to 60% of non-workers. However, once again, there are marked differences among workers; when workers are classified into social classes based on their occupation status, it is found that more than half of those from the highest social classes (52%) consider financial matters to be extremely important, compared to only one-quarter of those from the lower social classes (26%). Explaining the differences of opinion for financial situation is very similar to work, i.e. those on the extremes (no work/lowest income and work with better employment conditions/highest income) consider that their financial position is more important than those in-between (work with poorer employment conditions/middle-level income). As before, this is not a sign of inconsistency; in this instance, it reflects that the worst off acknowledge their plight and the better off acknowledge their financial good fortune; the importance is less immediate to those who have the means to supplement their welfare income (less severe financial plight, without marked economic well-being).

Economic status is also a cleavage among lone parents for non-economic domains. First, dividing the lone parent population into workers/non workers (or economically active/not or main income earners/not) reveals differences of opinion over health, services and advice & support. For health, the greatest difference is between earners and non-earners; virtually all (98%) of those who do not earn the majority of their weekly income consider health to be very important, whereas a significant minority of non-earners do not (13%). Almost half (47%) of non-workers consider services to be very important compared to less than one third (30%) of workers. Finally, more non-earners value advice & support more highly than earners; 68% rate this very important compared to 54% of earners. This finding for advice & support is particularly interesting. A priori speculation could have been posited in either direction, i.e. workers considering it *less* important reflecting greater independence among this group of lone parents or workers considering it *more* important reflecting the necessity of support structures to enable them to participate in the labour market. The greater level of concern among non-working lone parents confirms that there is a need for support beyond that which facilitates labour market participation. Lone parent organisations provide such support, but the incomplete geographical coverage (1.2.2) of their support groups means that not all lone parents have access to benefit from them. Care must be taken in drawing attention to lone parent's need for support; this should not lead to attempts to question the 'viability' of the lone parent unit. *All* workers in family units (two parent families included) need the support of others to facilitate labour market participation.

Other economic divisions also divide lone parent opinions for non-economic domains. Workers of the 'lower' social classes are more likely to consider that housing is important, but less likely to

consider that leisure is important and whether lone parents receive maintenance from their ex-partner is associated with the importance of control over life and others' attitude toward them. One third fewer of those who receive maintenance consider others' attitude to be important (9% compared 29% of those who don't receive maintenance payments). In contrast, more non-recipients are concerned with the amount of control they have over their lives; 79% of whom rate this extremely important, compared to 59% of those who receive maintenance. This was counter-intuitive, i.e. it was anticipated that those receiving maintenance would be more concerned given their ex-partner's role (control) in supplying part of their income. Thus, it would appear that resources (income via maintenance) to afford lone parents more financial control is more important than the symbolic problem of relying on an ex-partner to provide income. Significantly, these sentiments were expressed prior to the Child Support Act (2.2.4 & 2.4.2); with the enforced payment of maintenance from the absent parent now replacing, rather than enhancing the statutory state income of the lone parent, it would be interesting to see if the balance of opinion has since altered.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - DOMAIN LEVEL: The employment and financial characteristics of lone parents are (even) more widely associated with variations in satisfaction at domain level:

1) Among workers, the condition of their employment is associated with how satisfied they are with their financial circumstances, neighbourhood and the amount of control they have over their own lives.
2) Receipt of maintenance is associated with satisfaction for financial circumstances, work, services and crime.
3) However, the key distinction is between lone parents who are employed and those who are not. Variations in satisfaction are evident for every domain.

The nature of these variations is consistent across domains; workers, those with more secure employment, those with more employment and those in receipt of maintenance are relatively more satisfied in each case. The workers/not distinction is most notable for its general applicability. Economic advantage is closely associated with a positive experience of life.

As for the definitional component of domain QoL, the greatest differences are expressed for the work domain; while two-thirds of employees are satisfied with the work that they do (67%), the same proportion of non-workers are dissatisfied with their employment opportunities (70%). This latter statistic is made all the worse, in view of the fact that it is the economically disadvantaged that are most concerned of all with opportunities to better themselves. The fallacy of lone parents being unwilling to work has been exposed; the finding that more than two-thirds of lone parents without work take no comfort from the prospect of their situation improving, presses home the need for initiatives to facilitate lone parents' employment ambitions.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - OVERALL QoL: In both models (MAQoL and SMQoL), QoL is strongly associated with economic character; working/earning/economically active lone parents are more likely to be among the lone parents with the *highest* QoL (for example, 69% of working lone parents in the MAQoL model), in contrast to non working/non earning/economically inactive lone parents, who are more likely to be among the lone parents with the *lowest* QoL (also, by coincidence,

69% of non working lone parents in the MAQoL model). As with so many other studies of QoL, economic status plays a central role in accounting for QoL.

However, other economic characteristics which dissect (social class of workers) and span (maintenance receipt) the employment divisions are also a source of difference. In the MAQoL model, the higher the social class of workers, the higher the lone parent's QoL. The critical distinction is between professional & managerial classes and all others, i.e. classes A & B versus C, D & E[4]; i.e. twice the proportion of A & B class workers are among those lone parents with the highest QoL (59% versus 26% of C, D, & E classes). Nevertheless, variations among workers are less extensive than those between workers and non workers. The same conclusion can be drawn for variations according to receipt of maintenance; recipients are more likely to experience a higher QoL (MAQoL model), i.e. two-thirds of recipients (66%) compared to less than one half (45%) of non-recipients. Nevertheless, once again, these differences are less marked than those between, workers and non-workers.

Economic status is of central importance in explaining lone parent QoL. Most importantly, economic advantage is associated with higher QoL and with satisfaction over the full breadth of life concerns that were researched. The conclusions are less straightforward concerning how lone parents define QoL. What was apparent was that many of the preconceptions of lone parents' economic outlook are completely misunderstood; lone parents are notably concerned with opportunities to better themselves and, more generally, with their work status.

8.3.1b Formal Education

To what extent is education (defined in terms of achievement and participation) a cleavage among lone parents in terms of their QoL opinions?

DEFINITION OF QoL: Education is associated with how important lone parents regard opportunities, advice & support, others' attitude, housing, family, leisure, money, neighbourhood and transport.

Education is widely acknowledged to be a means for improving life chances; therefore, it would be expected that educated lone parents would place greater value on having opportunities to better themselves. The survey results confirm an association, but the nature is contrary to what was anticipated, i.e. for lone parents, early school leavers (less educated) are more likely to value such opportunities. Whereas, almost one half (48%) of those who left school at the minimum school leaving age (15 or 16) consider such opportunities to be extremely important, only one-third (33%) of those who have been educated beyond compulsory schooling felt likewise. Thus, the concern with opportunities is greater among those lone parents who did not capitalise upon them when at school (and see 8.3.1a).

Less participation is also associated with a greater concern over family life, neighbourhood, financial situation, leisure and others' attitude. However, in contrast, more of the educated are likely to

consider that housing and advice & support are important; almost two-thirds of those who continued their education after school consider housing to be extremely important (65%), compared to only one half of those whose formal education ended with school (57%). Similarly, while 38% of those with more education consider advice & support to be extremely important, only 24% of those with less education feel likewise. This result for advice & support also contradicts the a priori hypothesis. Education broadens horizons; but the survey results suggest that if educated lone parents are to realise their potential, then the advice & support of others is necessary, and is acknowledged as such.

Educational attainment is associated with the importance of housing, family, others' attitude, financial situation and transportation; more lone parents with low educational attainment are of the opinion that the first four of these domains are important. However, twice as many lone parents with high educational attainment consider transportation to be very important; 44% compared to only 21% of those with low educational attainment. As was mentioned above, horizons are broadened and more opportunities are open to those with more education; the greater concern of educated lone parents with transport would seem to be a concrete manifestation of this, i.e. the more insular and localised lifeworlds of those with less education reduce the significance of transport to their lives, relative to those with more education.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - DOMAIN LEVEL: Education is equally significant regarding domain satisfaction. Those who left school at the earliest opportunity are less likely to be satisfied with control over life, health, money, opportunities, and others' attitude and those who achieved greater success in education are more likely to be satisfied with health, work, financial situation and the amount of control they had over their own lives.

As for domain importance, the age at which the respondent left school is associated with opportunities; more of those who left school at a early age are less satisfied with the opportunities open to them; 41% of whom rate this, at best, quite important, compared to only 23% of later leavers. Thus, greater dissatisfaction is expressed by early school leavers on an issue which is of greater significance to them.

However, the greatest differences are expressed for control and others' attitude; educated lone parents are more satisfied with both; for control, 61% of those with at least two years of post-compulsory education are among the most satisfied lone parents, compared to only 32% of those with less education. Similarly, twice the proportion of later school leavers are satisfied with others' attitude toward them, i.e. 52%, compared to only 25% of those who left school as soon as they were permitted. The confidence factor resulting from education (control) and the status in the eyes of wider society (others' attitude) suggest that education may contribute directly to the explanation on both issues.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - OVERALL QoL: Lone parents with more education and those attaining higher standards, are more likely to experience a higher QoL. Participation is only significant within the MAQoL model; only one third of those who left school at the earliest opportunity (15 or 16) are among those lone parents who experience the highest QoL (30%), whereas almost one half (48%) of those continuing with their school education beyond the minimum

leaving age, are among this group. Educational attainment is positively associated with QoL in both models, i.e. higher achievers have a higher QoL. For example, in the SMQoL model, more than half (54%) experience an above average QoL, compared to fewer than one-third (31%) of those with lower achievement.

Once again, the dominant conclusion is that socio-economic advantage (here, education) is associated with a higher QoL (for the overall and domain levels of analysis). Interestingly, however, the particular domains in which education matters most (transport for domain importance and control & others' attitude for domain satisfaction) are different to those of economic status.

8.3.1c Housing

DEFINITION OF QoL: The housing circumstances of lone parents are associated with the importance of transport, housing, control over life, opportunities to better themselves and financial situation.

The results for the housing domain are particularly interesting; while renters are more likely to be concerned with housing than owners (65% of renters consider housing to be extremely important, compared to 46% of owners), there is no variation between lone parents with different tenancy arrangements. Thus, lone parents who share accommodation, are no more concerned with housing than those who live alone; the problems of shared accommodation (e.g. overcrowding) do not seem to influence the overall level of concern with housing. Indeed, the tenancy arrangement of lone parents makes no difference whatsoever to lone parent's outlook on QoL. For the other four domains where housing status matters, those who rent are more likely to be concerned than those who own property.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - DOMAIN LEVEL: Housing circumstance is a more important division among lone parents in terms of domain satisfaction; together, housing tenure, sector and tenancy are associated with satisfaction for eight domains, i.e. housing, money, others' attitude (all three housing characteristics), crime, health, work (tenure & sector) services (tenure) and advice & support (tenancy).

The nature of variation is consistent across domains, i.e. owners, private sector tenants and those residing with their parents are more satisfied. Grouping lone parents into quartiles on the basis of housing satisfaction, it is found that renters are as likely to be among the most satisfied group, as they are among the least satisfied group. However, ten times as many owners are among those who are most satisfied with their housing (51%) as compared to the least satisfied group (5%). Furthermore, housing satisfaction varies according to sector and tenancy. While the majority of those sharing with their parents are satisfied with their housing (57%), only one-quarter of those who do not express satisfaction (27%). This result suggests that the Government's concern to encourage lone parents to take-up residence with their parents rather than seek independent accommodation (McKendrick 94) would have a positive effect on their lives. However, as was conceded earlier (5.4), the validity of the housing satisfaction indicators on the questionnaire is questionable when

lone parents with different tenancy arrangements form the basis of analysis. Nevertheless, the finding is consistent with objective housing conditions (when lone parent households are compared to other family/household groups) which show that lone parent householders experience poorer housing conditions.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - OVERALL QoL: Lone parents who reside in owner occupied (and more generally, private sector) accommodation and those who share accommodation with other family members, experience a higher QoL. For example, in the MAQoL model, 54% of 'owner-occupiers' experience a high QoL, compared to only 29% of renters. In terms of housing sector, in the SMQoL model, those from the private sector experience a higher QoL that independent sector tenants, who in turn experience a higher QoL than council sector tenants; the majority of private sector residents experience an above average QoL (53%) compared to 42% of independent sector tenants and only 29% of council sector tenants.

Once more, the survey findings make valuable contributions to housing policy debates, particularly in light of the British Government's recent concern to 'return' lone parents to their mother; lone parents who stay with their family are more likely to experience an above average QoL; 54% of those who lived alone had a below average QoL, compared to 38% of those who lived with their families. While caution was urged regarding the tenancy-housing satisfaction link, there is no grounds for disputing the findings for overall QoL. The Government's proposed policy is unwelcome in the sense that it was introduced with ulterior motives (to save on welfare payments for *finance's* sake). However, there are clearly advantages for some lone parents in sharing accommodation with their family. Future research should explore the nature of these positive features paying particular attention as to whether these advantage would also be experienced by the lone parents the Government wishes to 'return to mother'.

In summary, the housing data mirrors that of economic and education status; socio-economic advantage is associated with a better QoL. The results for the housing domain were particularly interesting and, in contrast, to education and economic status, seem to provide support for Government's proposed policy (the outcome of, *not* the rational underlying).

8.3.1d Transport

DEFINITION OF QoL: The extent to which lone parents are able to meet their transportation needs is associated with how importantly they regard six domains, i.e. family, housing, financial situation, crime, advice & support and services.

Once again, marked differences are expressed over financial situation; lone parents who depend on others for transportation are more likely to consider their financial situation to be very important, i.e. 91% of those who are fully dependent on others for their transportation, compared to 80% of those who are not. Differences for services are equally marked; 62% of self providers of transport rate services very important compared to 78% of the others. Similar findings are found for housing,

family and others' attitude, with those less able to provide for their own transportation being more concerned. In contrast, although the majority of lone parents consider that crime is important, those who provide for more of their transportation needs are more concerned (99% of whom consider crime to be very important compared to 92% of the others); the increased level of concern is most likely the result of the direct additional threat of car crime.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - DOMAIN LEVEL: Satisfaction with housing, financial situation, crime, neighbourhood and health varied with lone parents ability to provide for their transportation requirements. In each case, lone parents who provide more of their own needs are more satisfied.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - OVERALL QoL: Lone parents who provide more of their own transportation tend to have a higher QoL. However, there is a shift in emphasis across the two models of overall QoL. In the SMQoL model, the critical distinction is between those who are fully dependent on others for transportation and those who are able to provide at least part of their own requirements; more lone parents who can provide (some of) their transportation needs have an above average QoL (39% compared to 26% of those who are fully dependent). In the MAQoL model, the critical distinction is between those who are completely independent and those who rely on others to some degree; 61% of the former are among the lone parents with the highest QoL as opposed to only 46% of the latter. Nevertheless, both results emphasise that those who are more able to provide for their own transportation are more likely to experience a higher QoL.

Unlike the other socio-economic divisions (transportation) character is not associated with (transportation) opinion for either satisfaction or importance. The finding that lone parents' actual experience of transport has little bearing on their opinions of transport is further evidence of lone parent indifference toward the role of transport in their lives (see 8.2.1a re Figure 8.1). Indeed, this raises doubts over the role of transport as an independent explanatory factor for QoL opinion (given that it provides no explanation for the domain where it should have the greatest bearing); the role of transport in the multivariate synthesis of chapter nine should be monitored to address this possibility. However, the over-riding conclusion for transport mirrors that for all socio-economic characteristics; socio-economic advantage is associated with a better experience of life, although those who are disadvantaged are marginally more likely to be concerned with more domains.

8.3.2 DEMOGRAPHIC RELATIONSHIPS

More than most groups, lone parents are identified with respect to their demographic character, e.g. *teenage mothers* (age & gender), parents of *pre-school age* children (family structure). Therefore, an understanding of how QoL varies according to these population traits is a most useful contribution to knowledge.

8.3.2a Age Of Lone Parent

DEFINITION OF QoL: The importance of crime, services and financial situation vary according to the age of the lone parent. More younger lone parents consider their financial position and services to be more important, while more older lone parents consider crime to be more important. Differences are not as marked as those between different socio-economic groups.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - DOMAIN LEVEL: More older lone parents are more satisfied than younger lone parents over crime, housing, health, financial situation and work. Differences are greatest for housing and financial situation; while less than one-third of lone parents under forty are among the quartile who are most satisfied with their housing (23% of those aged under 25, 26% of those in their late twenties and 30% of those in their thirties), half of those aged over forty are among this group of lone parents (51%). For financial situation, only one-tenth (13%) of those under thirty are satisfied, compared to almost one-third (30%) of those over thirty years of age.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - OVERALL QoL: Older lone parents experience a higher QoL. This relationship (the older the lone parent, the higher the QoL) is consistent for age cohorts, based on five-year age bands in the MAQoL model; however, the critical distinction is between lone parents under thirty and those thirty years old and over. The majority of lone parents over thirty are among the lone parents with the highest QoL (58%); in contrast, the majority of those who are under thirty years of age are among those with the lowest QoL (61%).

Where age differences matter, it is clearly the case that younger lone parents are relatively worse off; this is particularly so for overall QoL. However, in most areas of life, age does not differentiate between experiences of lone parents; age-differences are more selective than general. Financial circumstance is the domain where difference is most marked, with younger lone parents more concerned and less satisfied than older lone parents. If age difference provides a direct explanatory role, then it points to the increasing significance of money matters among the younger generation; an observation which is consistent with the ethos of the era in which these lone parents were socialised. Nevertheless, the key conclusion is that there is limited age-based variation of QoL opinions among the lone parent population.

8.3.2b Gender

In other aspects of lone parenthood, gender makes a difference (2.6.4). However, is gender an important division among lone parents with regard to their views on QoL? For reasons outlined in 4.5, differences between male and female lone parents should be deemed significant at the 90% probability level.

DEFINITION OF QoL: Even when statistical thresholds are relaxed, the survey shows that gender has a limited influence on QoL outlook, i.e. more women are concerned with opportunities to better themselves and advice & support. However, the extent of these differences is marked and the nature

is particularly revealing. On one hand, these reinforce the gender stereotype that women need more advice & support than men; while a clear majority of women regard advice & support to be very important (66%), only a minority of men agree with this opinion (38%). There is no place for simplistic interpretations of this result; what is required (beyond this thesis) is an in-depth analysis of why female lone parents need more support. After all, there are grounds for proclaiming that this finding is counter-intuitive; parenthood is traditionally perceived as a womens' domain and thus it could have been expected that lone fathers would have been more in need of advice & support than lone mothers. It follows therefore that the high demand for advice & support from the lone parent population, is not related to lone parenthood per se, but rather to the composition of the lone parent population (90% are women). However, it is also true that more female lone parents are concerned with opportunities to better themselves. Female lone parents are not passive recipients of their economic condition (as much as the policy attacks on lone motherhood would have us believe) but, in contrast, are more likely than male lone parents to want to improve their lot. For example, while 66% of women consider that opportunities to better themselves are very important, only 38% of male lone parents feel likewise. Indeed, it is likely that these findings are inter-related, rather than inconsistent, i.e. the need for advice & support among female lone parents is a recognition that this must be forthcoming in order that they can capitalise upon opportunities open to them (although see 8.3.1a).

EVALUATIONS OF QoL : Once again, gender plays a restricted, but significant role in accounting for different experiences among lone parents, i.e. more women are satisfied than men over the attitude of others toward lone parents and with their neighbourhood. More than twice the number of men (45%, compared to 21% of women) are among those who are most dissatisfied with others' attitude, and, unlike men, the majority (62%) of women are satisfied with their neighbourhood (only 40% of men are satisfied). Thus, despite greater public hostility toward *female* lone parents, it is men who are most dissatisfied with others' attitude. This mismatch of perception against the reality of public opinion, suggests that men are less comfortable with their role as a lone parent; the extent to which these attitudes are due to their discomfort in non-conforming (against societies 'designated' role for men) is an issue worthy of more exploration. The findings for neighbourhood are most likely a geographical expression of identity crisis, in that the neighbourhood takes on a new persona for men as their family responsibilities increase; an experience with which it seems most men are dissatisfied with. Given the limited influence of gender on QoL at the domain level, it should come as no surprise that gender is not a significant factor at the summary level; in both models of overall QoL, women are no more likely to experience a lower (or higher) QoL than men.

Thus, gender has a very limited role in explaining QoL differences among lone parents. However, gender is extremely important in the limited instances where it does matter. Interestingly, gender matters in those domains of life which are less tangible, e.g. advice & support is less easily measured than housing conditions. Thus, the insights revealed in the thesis would have been overlooked if the more typical approach of using standard, easily quantifiable measures of QoL were used (4.1.2b). Finally, it is interesting to note that where gender matters, it is the women who express the most positive experiences. This contrasts with much of the evidence that compares men and women; it

seems that lone parenthood is (the) one arrangement wherein women can experience a more positive life than men.

8.3.2c Family Structure

It is also important to consider variations in QoL, among different types of lone parent families which, after all, constitute the most important context within which their lives are led (Table 6.6 in 6.4.1).

DEFINITION OF QoL: Family structure is the basis for differences in QoL outlook for half of the domains surveyed, i.e. crime, housing, financial situation, others' attitude, transportation and advice & support. However, there are no particularly strong relationships. Indeed, it could be argued that a non-relationship is the most significant finding, i.e. neither the size, nor the composition of the lone parent family unit is associated with how importantly family life is regarded. This is not to dismiss the differences between for example, the family life of a lone parent with a baby and the family life of a lone parent with teenagers. Self-evidently, the differences between such family lives are substantial. However, family life is of central importance to lone parents, *regardless* of the family age-composition.

However, composition does matter; more lone parents with fewer children consider transport to be more important, whereas more of those with more children consider advice & support and housing to be important. Lone parents with pre-school children are less likely to consider that crime, advice & support and their financial position are important. In some respects, these findings confirm expectations. Thus, it was expected that those with more children would be more likely to value advice & support given the greater demands placed upon these lone parents. In other respects, these findings are suggestive of new insights. Thus, the greater concern with crime among lone parents with older children most likely reflects the greater vulnerability of older children to commit crime/be offended against, as they get older. However, some findings are counter-intuitive. Thus, while it was expected that lone parents with a pre-school child would value advice & support most of all (given the heightened responsibilities and demands associated with raising a young child), this was not the case; almost two-fifths (38%) of parents of school age children regard advice & support as very important, compared to only one quarter (28%) of those with pre-school age children. Thus, more support interventions with lone parents should be targeted at those who are parents of school-age children.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - DOMAIN QoL: Family composition is even more widely associated with lone parents' satisfaction with different domains of their life, i.e. housing, crime, family, life control, advice & support, others' attitude, work, health, financial situation and leisure.

More lone parents with fewer children and more of those who do not have an elder child capable of supervising a younger child (in families with a child of primary school age) are more satisfied with their family life; 86% of those with one child are satisfied, compared to 77% of those with more than

one child and almost one half (46%) of those without a 'childcarer' are dissatisfied, compared to only one quarter (26%) of those with such a child. Thus, the demands of the family unit have a direct bearing on satisfaction with family life. While an overwhelming majority of lone parents are satisfied with their family life, there is a small, but significant, minority of lone parents with a higher family workload (more children, no help within the family), who are dissatisfied.

However, the most marked variations are found for housing and leisure. Lone parents with a pre-school child are less satisfied with their housing circumstances; only 20% being satisfied compared to 40% of those without a pre-school child. For leisure, more satisfaction is expressed by those with fewer children; 56% of those with one child are satisfied, compared to 47% of those with two and only 29% of those with three or more children. The leisure findings confirm the restrictive effect of children on adult carer's lives; for those concerned with improving the QoL of lone parents, the need for leisure among lone parents with greater family commitments is readily apparent.

More generally, family composition produces a varied set of QoL outcomes:

1) More of those having a pre-school child are less satisfied with housing, crime, health, financial situation and work.
2) More of those lone parents whose eldest child is potentially a childcarer, are less satisfied with control over their own life.
3) The more practical support from children (the older the child, the greater their capability), the more likely it is that the lone parent will be satisfied with crime.
4) Finally, lone parents with higher expenditure requirements, are less satisfied with others' attitude and crime.

It is not only the *strength* of influence that is important; the *extent* of influence is important too. In this latter respect, the composition of the lone parent family is a critical cleavage in lone parent's QoL experience given that differences are expressed over a wide range of domains.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - OVERALL QoL: Lone parents with fewer children experience a higher QoL. In the MAQoL model, the majority of lone parents with one or two children are among those who experience the highest QoL (59% and 56% respectively), whereas the majority of those with at least three children are among those with the lowest QoL (also 59%). In the SMQoL model, lone parents with a pre-school child are much more likely to experience a below-average QoL (62%, compared to 24% who are above average), in contrast to those whose youngest child is at least of school age, who are as likely to experience an above average QoL, as a below average QoL (c45%). Once again, the results suggest an inverse relationship between QoL and family workload.

The composition of the lone parent family has an important role to play in explaining variations in QoL among lone parents. While the influence is general, rather than specific to particular domains (lower family workloads being associated with a more favourable experience of life)it is those domains for which family structure matters most that is really significant, i.e. advice % support and crime for domain importance and family life and leisure for domain satisfaction. this heightened significance for specific domains is generally more typical for demographic divisions of the lone parent population..

8.3.3 GEOGRAPHICAL RELATIONSHIPS

Does geography matter with regard to variations in lone parent QoL? Three geographical bases are analysed to address this issue.

8.3.3a Settlement Areas

One specific comparison is made (facilitated by high survey returns), i.e. lone parents from Glasgow are compared to lone parents from Cunninghame (Figure 1.1 in 1.2.1). This is drawn from a more general comparison between lone parents from different types of settlement.

DEFINITION OF QoL: More lone parents from Glasgow consider transport to be more important than lone parents from Cunninghame; 45% of whom rate this very important, as against 64% from Glasgow. It was expected that transportation would be a more pertinent issue for those outside the city given the textbook caricature of the city as a central, accessible place. However, the lone parent results suggest otherwise. As others have noted (Robertson 84), the spaces occupied by the majority of lone parents in urban Scotland are poorly served and isolated from city life; consequently, transportation becomes a *more* pressing issue for city dwellers in the Scottish context.

Lone parents who reside in 'industrial' locations are more likely than those from cities, who, in turn, are more likely than those from non-industrial towns to consider that others' attitudes are important. Once more, these results contest the dominant discourse on city life. Cities are characterised as impersonal places where people lead insular lives. Yet it is found that lone parents from the city care more about what other's think than those from smaller (non-industrial) areas outside city limits. This result is suggestive of a geographical basis to social attitudes; a dimension which the social attitudes research community have ignored to date.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - DOMAIN LEVEL: As for the definition of QoL, residency is a limited source of variation among lone parents in terms of domain satisfaction; it is associated with varying satisfaction over family life, neighbourhood and others' attitude. City residents are most satisfied with family life, those in non industrial areas are more satisfied with others' attitude toward them and those in industrial areas are more satisfied with their neighbourhood. Thus, there is no clear advantage in living in any particular type of settlement. Holding forth the inner-city as lone parents ideal residential location (Rose & Le Bourdias 86) is inconsistent with the experience of the lone parents surveyed. The results also add further insight into the geography of social attitudes; in more 'anonymous' areas (industrial towns, cities), lone parents perceive more hostility toward them, i.e. there is less satisfaction with others' attitude. Furthermore, lone parents from Cunninghame are more satisfied than those from Glasgow with the opportunities that are available to them. Once more, the assumed advantage of city-living fails to find expression in terms of lone parents' QoL evaluations; while it is generally accepted that lone parents benefit from a centralised location,

affording them greater access to services and facilities, the survey results suggest that 'city' districts do not provide lone parents with the opportunities they require in life.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - OVERALL LEVEL: Nevertheless, despite the failure of the city to emerge as a better place for lone parents at the domain level, lone parents from cities experience a higher QoL than those from beyond the city limits; in the SMQoL model, city residents are more likely to experience an above average QoL (43% compared to 31% of non-city lone parents). Thus, the cumulative effect on lone parents' life experience is sufficient to reverse the trend for the specific domains where living outside the city has clear advantages.

Beyond the empirical significance of these findings, the results for settlement areas mark a departure from preceding analysis. That is, there is no single advantageous state for the evaluative components of QoL; domain-specific advantages were found for lone parents from different areas of residence. Following on from this, it is the first instance whereby the overall QoL results contrast with the domain level results; city residents have a higher overall QoL, despite faring less favourably to non-city residents on two of the three domains where residency matters. The key empirical finding is that there are grounds for challenging the assumed advantages of city living for lone parents.

8.3.3b Deprivation Areas

More substantial variations in QoL opinion were expected when lone parents from areas of deprivation are compared to those residing outside these areas.

DEFINITION OF QoL: More lone parents from 'Areas for Priority Treatment' (hereafter APT) are more concerned with family life and other peoples' attitude toward them; 92% of APT residents consider family life to be extremely important, as against 79% of non-APT residents. Similarly, over two-fifths of APT residents are of the opinion that other peoples' attitude matters (41% rate this very important), compared to less than one-quarter of non-APT lone parents (27%).

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - DOMAIN LEVEL: Residency, expressed in terms of deprivation areas is associated with satisfaction over a broad range of domains, i.e. housing, crime, health, control over life, opportunities, transport, services and others' attitude. In each case, lone parents from areas of deprivation are less satisfied.

The differences are particularly marked for housing, health and others' attitude. Whereas 63% of non-APT residents are among the group of lone parents who are most satisfied with housing, only 39% of APT residents expressed a comparable level of satisfaction (the respective proportions for health are 60% and 30%). Similarly, one-half (51%) of APT residents are dissatisfied with others' attitude, compared to only one-quarter (26%) of non-APT residents.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - OVERALL QoL: The findings for domain satisfaction are applicable for QoL at the aggregate level, i.e. in the MAQoL model, lone parents from deprived areas experience a lower QoL. A majority of APT residents are among those who experience the lowest

QoL (65%), whereas, a majority of non-APT residents are among those who experience the highest QoL (58%).

As was anticipated, living in an area of deprivation is associated with a lower QoL at both domain and overall QoL levels. However, a key finding that was not anticipated was the divergence of opinion regarding others' attitude; deprivation area residents are found to be much more concerned and much less satisfied. Once more, this adds further weight to the argument that the geography of social attitudes is an issue worthy of further exploration.

8.3.3c Lone Parent Character of Local Area

The 'lone parent' character of a locale was estimated using two indicators, i.e. whether or not there is a lone parent support group in the area of residence and the concentration of lone parent families of all families with dependent children.

DEFINITION OF QoL: Large differences of opinion are expressed for others' attitude; those from areas with a high concentration of lone parent families are more concerned, providing yet further support for more geographical analyses of social attitudes. Thus, half of those lone parents who reside in areas with a high concentration of lone parents (>15% of all families) consider others' attitude to be very important, compared to one quarter of those from areas with proportionately fewer lone parents (27% and 24% for areas with medium [11-15%] and low [<10%] concentrations of lone parents). In contrast, those from areas with relatively fewer lone parents are more concerned with transportation (62% of whom rate transportation very important, compared to 49% of those from areas with a high lone parent presence). In areas with a lone parent support group, more lone parents are less concerned with leisure (13% rating leisure to be of limited importance compared to 5% of those from areas without a support group).

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - DOMAIN LEVEL : Those who reside in an area with a support group are less satisfied with crime and health, but more satisfied with opportunities and with advice & support. Those from areas with a greater lone parent presence tend to be less satisfied with crime, housing and health. Whereas one half (52%) of those from areas without a support group are among those lone parents who are most dissatisfied with the opportunities open to them, only one-quarter (28%) of those from areas with a support group felt likewise. It seems probable therefore that lone parent support groups play a role in increasing opportunities (or, at least, lone parents' awareness of opportunities) in areas where they are operational.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - OVERALL QoL: In both models, those from areas with more lone parents tend to experience a lower QoL. For example, in the SMQoL model, while those from areas of low concentration are equally likely to experience an above average or below average QoL (c43%), the vast majority of those from areas of high concentrations experience a below average QoL 625, compared to 275 who experience an above average QoL). Similarly, where there is no lone parent support group, a higher QoL is experienced. In the MA model, almost two fifths of these

lone parents (37%) are among those lone parents with the highest QoL, compared to just over one quarter of lone parents from areas with a support group (27%). However, given the prior knowledge that the economically disadvantaged are over-concentrated in areas with more lone parents (Robertson 84) and given the earlier findings that economic disadvantage is so strongly associated with a lower QoL (8.3.1), the possibility that the result reflects a compositional effect, rather than a contextual effect seems most probable; Figure 9.1 in 9.2.2 will provide a definitive answer to this question.

The most striking feature of the geographical results is the significance of context in explaining variations in social attitudes. This was evident for each geographical division. Clearly, where lone parents live has an important bearing on their status in the eyes of the wider community. There is considerable research potential for geographers in this field.

8.3.4 RELATIONSHIPS WITH LONE PARENT CHARACTERISTICS

The last section (8.3.3c) demonstrated that *lone parent* factors help explain the nature of lone parent QoL. From the environmental basis of 8.3.3c, this (lone parent) line of enquiry is extended to consider whether QoL varies according to those personal characteristics which are specific to lone parents. Six such characteristics are now discussed. These are *lone parent* in that they are either unique to lone parents (e.g. duration of lone parenthood) or their lone parent context sets them apart from other population groups (as is the case for migration, refer to 10.4). Either way, these *lone parent specific* factors would be overlooked in research that was not exclusively based on lone parents. Indeed, much lone parent research overlooks their significance.

8.3.4a Previous Marital Status

DEFINITION OF QoL: Previous marital status, i.e. whether lone parents are divorced, separated, widowed or single never-married, is one of the most widely used means of differentiating between the lone parent population. However, in terms of their outlook on QoL, it is far less significant than any of the characteristics discussed thus far. Indeed, the entry route into lone parenthood is only associated with the importance of transportation; more separated lone parents consider transport to be important (38% rate it very important compared to only 21% of divorced lone parents and 18% of separated lone parents).

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - DOMAIN LEVEL: Previous marital status is a more significant cleavage among lone parents in terms of their satisfaction; marked variations are evident for six domains. In general, divorced lone parents are more likely to be satisfied than separated lone parents who, in turn, are more likely to be satisfied than single lone parents.

The general scenario holds true for housing. For crime, work and transport, divorced & separated lone parents are equally satisfied and both are more likely to be satisfied than single lone parents. For health, single & separated lone parents are equally satisfied, but both are less likely to be satisfied than divorced lone parents. Single lone parents are more likely to be satisfied (43%) than separated lone parents (19%) with control over life, although they are still less likely to be satisfied than divorced lone parents (50%). Finally, while the vast majority of lone parents are satisfied with family life, more divorced and separated lone parents are among the minority who are not. These latter findings are particularly significant. The findings seem to suggest that the status of the relationship has a bearing on lone parent's sense of overall life control; formal dissolution of a relationship via divorce, contributes to a sense of increased independence among these lone parents while the dissatisfaction of separated lone parents reflects the uncertainty of their status. However, the family life results are even more revealing. Once again, the crusade against single never married lone parents must be questioned on the basis of the survey data. Re family life, the *most* important aspect of lone parents' life (Table 6.6 in 6.4.1), more single never-married lone parents express satisfaction than both separated and divorced lone parents. Lone parents' opinion on their family life is not accorded any significance in public debates on the (de)merits of lone parenthood on family life. The finding that those having the *least* involvement with the children's other parent express *most* satisfaction with their family life, seriously undermines the rationale of the majority opinion that two parent life is always best, at least in terms of (lone parent) family life.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - OVERALL QoL: Divorced lone parents experience a higher QoL than both single lone parents and separated lone parents. For example, in the SMQoL model, the majority of single and separated lone parents experience a lower than average QoL (58% compared to 25% who experience an above average QoL), whereas divorced lone parents are equally likely to experience QoL at both extremes (c47%). The results further confirm the dominant trend of the domain level analysis and are consistent with the findings of previous studies using external measures of the QoL (Ermisch 91).

While the most consistent finding for previous marital status is that divorced lone parents enjoy a more favourable experience of life than separated lone parents and they, in turn, than single never-married lone parents, the breadth of this division across domains is less marked than expected. Indeed, the most significant finding for a particular domain actually bucks this trend, i.e. the relatively higher satisfaction in family life experienced by the single never-married.

8.3.4b Perceived Status

QoL AT DOMAIN LEVEL: Whether a lone parent perceives themselves as such, is not associated with how importantly domains are regarded. However, perceived status is associated with how satisfied lone parents are with housing, crime, financial situation and work. For each, those perceiving themselves to be a single parent are more dissatisfied. For example, whereas 27% of those who perceive of themselves as a lone parent are satisfied with housing, 44% of those who do

not are satisfied. Perceived status is significant not so much as a causal explanatory factor, but rather as an indicator of the public projection of lone parents. That is, those most likely to identify themselves as lone parents are not representative of the lone parent population on four key issues, i.e. 'public' presentation over-estimates dissatisfaction with housing, crime, financial situation and work. Debates involving lone parents on these issues must be cautious of exaggerating dissatisfaction.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - OVERALL QoL: Despite a limited impact at the domain level, identification as a lone parent is strongly associated with QoL. In each model, those who perceive themselves as a single parent experience a lower QoL; in the SMQoL model, almost two-thirds of whom consider that they have an above average QoL (62%), compared to less than one-half of other lone parents (47%). The same cautionary note applies as before.

8.3.4c Duration Of Lone Parenthood

The duration of lone parenthood is not a key factor in terms of QoL opinions. No associations are found for either the definition of QoL at domain level or the evaluation of overall QoL. For evaluation of QoL at domain level, only one significant relationship emerges, i.e. lone parents of longer duration tend to be more satisfied with their neighbourhood. This is consistent with the earlier finding that changing life roles influenced satisfaction with neighbourhood (8.3.2b), i.e. as for gender (men), those whose life role is in a state of flux (lone parents of short duration) express more dissatisfaction with their local neighbourhood context. Population geographers should seek closer ties with socio-cultural geographers to explore the inter-relationship between demographic changes and lifeworld changes in more detail.

8.3.4d Lone Parent Activism

DEFINITION OF QoL: Whether or not the lone parent is, or has been, a member of a lone parent support group divides opinion regarding the importance of housing, services and advice & support. As was expected, support group members are more concerned with advice & support, two-fifths (43%) of whom rate this extremely important, compared to only one-quarter (27%) of those who are not.

Those who are, or were previously, members of a lone parent support group are also more concerned with their housing; 94% rate this very important compared to 85% of non-members. Current members are more concerned with services than ex-members, who in turn are more concerned than non-members; the respective proportions who rate this to be very important are 76%, 69% and 60% respectively.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - DOMAIN QoL: Those who are members of a lone parent support group are less satisfied with health and other peoples' attitude toward them. The differences for the latter are particularly significant; half as many support group members are satisfied (22% compared

to only 40% of non-members). This raises the possibility that participation within a lone parent support group increases the sense of separation between lone parents and others in the community. Alternatively, these attitudes may be the very reason for joining a lone parent group. An examination of why lone parents join support groups would be a useful contribution to knowledge that would enable us to evaluate these contesting theories. Equally significant, is the finding that group members are no more satisfied with the advice & support they receive than non-group members. The interventions of lone parent support groups are working in favour of those most in need; they raise satisfaction to a level comparable to that of those who are in less need of support, but they do not (or are not able to) cater for all the support needs of their group members..

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - OVERALL LEVEL: In the MAQoL model, those who are not members of a lone parent support group, experience a higher QoL. Whereas, almost two-fifths (39%) of non-members are among the third of lone parents who experience the highest QoL, only one-quarter (25%) of support group members are among this group. It seems unlikely that a lone parent supporting group would contribute to a lower QoL for its members. Rather, this result indicates that the lone parent support groups are catering for those sections of the lone parent population who are in greatest need of support.

8.3.4e Childcare

DEFINITION OF QoL: The childcare arrangements of lone parents are associated with how important neighbourhood, opportunities, work and others' attitude are considered to be. The key differences are not between those with childcare and those without. Rather, the type of childcare and the number of childcare options of lone parents *with* childcare, are the key points of variance.

The greatest differences emerge over others' attitude. More of those with fewer childcare options and those whose mother plays a prominent role in childcare are concerned with what other people think. One quarter (24%) of those with only one mode of childcare are concerned with others' attitude, compared to less than ten per cent of those with a greater range of childcare possibilities (7%). Similarly, less than two fifths (38%) of those whose mother is the most important source of childcare are not at all concerned with what other people thought of them; compared to more than one half (55%) of those whose mother is not involved in childcare support. These findings appear to suggest that those lone parents experiencing more interaction with other members of the community (more childcare, childcare beyond grandparents) are less concerned with what other people think. For those lone parents who interact with the wider community, others' attitude is less important.

Those with more childcare are more likely to consider that their neighbourhood is important; while less than one-in-ten (7%) of those with minimal (one or two) childcare options rate their neighbourhood to be of limited importance, more than one-quarter of those with at least three options felt this arena was unimportant in their lives (27%). The neighbourhood is also regarded to be less important if relatives are *not* used as child carers (67% of these lone parents consider their neighbourhood to be very important compared to 54% of those whose relatives provide childcare

support). Childcare support is an important service provided by those in the neighbourhood for carers in families. Given this, the results seem to suggest that greater concern with the neighbourhood arises when the neighbourhood provides less childcare support. The link may not be direct and causal, i.e. the higher significance of the neighbourhood to lone parents with less childcare, may reflect that they live more of their lives in this arena (given the lack of childcare opportunity to enable a more extensive lifeworld). Either way, this is a significant division among the lone parent population.

Significant differences also emerge depending on whether lone parents make use of child carers beyond the family. Lone parents whose friends help with childcare are less likely to regard work and neighbourhood as important; 13% of whom consider work to be extremely important and 53% consider their neighbourhood to be very important, compared to 31% and 67% respectively of those without the support of friends. Similarly, those for whom a public authority provides the main childcare service are less concerned with the opportunities they have to better themselves. This latter case clearly demonstrates the value of local authority childcare as a means to encourage employment (and other means of opportunity, such as education) and provides further support for the potential of improving lone parent's lot through policies that enabling policies.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - DOMAIN LEVEL: Childcare is also associated with variations in domain satisfaction. Differences between those with childcare and those without are particularly significant; especially so for other peoples' attitude toward them and opportunities to better themselves. Thus, one-quarter (24%) of lone parents with more restrictive childcare options (only one) are satisfied with others' attitude, compared to less than one-in-ten of those with more childcare options (7%). This insight counters the suggestion that lone parents' problem with others' attitude arises from a lack of interaction in the community, i.e. these lone parents are more satisfied. This demonstrates the utility of considering *both* definition and satisfaction in QoL research. However, further confirmation that childcare support enables lone parents to capitalise on opportunities to better themselves can be inferred from the finding that (only) one third (34%) of those with childcare are dissatisfied with opportunities to better themselves, compared to three fifths of those without childcare (59%). Those with childcare are also more likely to be satisfied with health and the amount of control they have over their own lives. Additionally, those with less childcare (among those with childcare) are more satisfied with their financial situation and their family life. Where a relative (other than the mother) performs a childcare function, higher satisfaction is expressed for health, opportunities, family life and advice & support. Furthermore, with a friend or neighbour as a child carer, less satisfaction is expressed for family life.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - OVERALL QoL: In the MAQoL model, those without childcare experience a lower QoL; more than half are among those lone parents who experience the lowest QoL (55%). Those with childcare are equally likely to be among the lone parents experiencing a high (35%), average (31%) or low (34%) QoL.

Clearly, childcare is an important determinant on the quality of lone parents lives. Policy debate (quite rightly) focuses on the role of childcare in facilitating lone parents' employment aspirations.

The survey results reinforce the argument that childcare is a key factor in this area, a key aspect of which is that lone parents without childcare are less satisfied with the opportunities available to them. However, the results also demonstrate that childcare is of wider significance, both in terms of their overall QoL and on other domains of their life.

8.3.4f Migration Behaviour

DEFINITION OF QoL: The importance of services, advice & support, work, others' attitude and health varies with respect to lone parent's migration experiences.

Recent migrants (those who have moved house within the last twelve months), are more likely to consider that advice & support is important; almost one half of migrants consider this to be extremely important (48%) compared to only one quarter of non migrants (27%) - yet migration histories are never referred to in debates of which lone parents are most in need of such support. The results suggest that the migration act compounds the difficulties faced by lone parents and that this leads to an increased need for support; the challenge of meeting (targeting support interventions) the support needs of migrants is a cause to which lone parent support groups must rise. Fairly recent migrants (within the last three years) are more concerned with services; 44% of whom consider this to be extremely important, compared to 29% of non-migrants. In contrast, those who have migrated within the last five years are less likely to consider that work is important; less than half (46%) rate work to be very important, compared to almost three-quarters (71%) of non migrants. Again, this is indicative of the different context of migration for lone parents; while much (non lone parent) migration is employment-related (Findlay & Rogerson 92), migrating lone parents are less concerned with work.

A migration that is associated with lone parenthood is that which is a direct result of lone parent formation, i.e. where the person migrates to become a lone parent (refer to 10.2.3a). This too is a cleavage among lone parents in terms of QoL opinions; these migrants are more likely to consider their health and others' attitude to be important; 21% of migrants rate others' attitude to be extremely important, compared to only 8% of non-migrants. This reinforces previous points (re advice & support) regarding migrants' greater need for a caring community (see above). Thus, the lack of understanding shown toward lone parents is felt most intensely by those who have moved from familiar surrounds in the transition to lone parenthood. More positively, at the individual level, the results therefore suggest that such feelings are most associated with a particular stage of lone parenthood and that therefore this concern over the (negative) attitude of others will lessen as the lone parent integrates into the community.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - DOMAIN LEVEL: Migration is also associated with domain satisfaction. Migrants are less satisfied with their financial situation. The results are testimony to the economic burden of migration upon lone parents; costs which have escalated with the withdrawal of statutory grants to enable low income families to furnish accommodation and the replacement of such grants with discretionary Social Fund payments, which are only awarded when it can be

demonstrated that the recipient can afford to make repayments! In contrast, lone parents who migrate into lone parenthood are more satisfied with leisure and the amount of control they have over their own lives. The differences are most marked for leisure; almost one-half (47%) of such migrants are satisfied, compared to only one-third (34%) of non-migrants. The findings for leisure are counter-intuitive, i.e. it would be reasonable to expect the reduced opportunities would arise with migration (and hence more dissatisfaction would be expressed). This does not lend itself to easy explanation and it is clear that leisure is a complex issue which is worthy of further investigation. For geographers in particular, the finding that migration coincides with a greater sense of control is particularly interesting. Clearly, population geography has much to explore as it turns its focus to the intangible and emotive aspects of migration (Fielding 93). Relationship breakdown elevates the sense of control for lone parents; migration plays a key role in creating a 'distance' which allows these positive emotions to flourish.

EVALUATIONS OF QoL - OVERALL QoL: Despite some positive experiences for particular domains, migrants are more likely to experience a lower QoL. In the MAQoL model, one-third of fairly recent migrants (move house within the last three years) are among those lone parents who experience the very lowest QoL (36%), compared to only one-quarter (23%) of non-migrants. In the SMQoL model, the differences are more marked; fairly recent migrants are much more likely to experience a below average QoL (65% compared to only 26% with an above average QoL) whereas non-migrants are equally likely to experience QoL at both extremes (c45%).

The results for lone parent migration are markedly different to those of other migrants (Findlay & Rogerson 92). In particular, migration is associated with a lower QoL. Lone parent migration is an issue geography, and population geography in particular, should focus attention on; the thesis will conclude by exploring lone parent migration in greater depth (chpt. 10).

8.4 CONCLUSION

The chapter began by addressing the inter-relationships between the different measures of life quality. First, it was shown that there is no overall relationship between satisfaction and importance (8.2.1). Thus, explaining the variations in domain importance and domain satisfaction were not systematically influenced by one another, e.g. because lone parents were satisfied, they were not more likely to be concerned. Rather, the nature of the relations between these concepts varied on a domain-by-domain basis. Second, the two measures of overall QoL were found to produce consistent results (8.2.2). That is, those lone parents who considered that they had an above average QoL (SMQoL model) were also more likely to among the lone parents with the highest QoL (MAQoL model). These two issues were important in that they instilled confidence in the results that follows.

The key QoL insight of this chapter was that no cleavage among lone parents is of universal significance. For the most part, the significance of being a certain type of lone parent was domain specific, i.e. differences occurred for some, but not all, domains. However, the significance of economic status was component specific, i.e. while, lone parents who were economically advantaged were more likely to be satisfied with all aspects of their life, no such universal conclusion can be drawn for domain importance

A second point is that, in general, the nature of the differences between groups of lone parent are consistent across domains. That is, if a group were more satisfied than another group on a particular domain, then they were more likely to be satisfied for each of the other domains where a significant difference could be discerned. However, there were some exceptions to this general rule. For example, while migrants were more likely to be satisfied with their financial situation, those who migrated to become a lone parent were less likely to be satisfied with their opportunities for leisure (8.3.4f).

What were the key empirical findings of the bivariate analysis of lone parents' QoL opinions? First, economic status in particular, and socio-economic status in general, were found to be central to the understanding of lone parent QoL. In general, socio-economic advantage was associated with a more positive experience of life, while, where differences were recorded, it tended to be the socio-economically disadvantaged who were more concerned with aspects of their life (8.3.1). However, the explanation does not stop with socio-economic circumstance. Rather, demographic, geographic and lone parent specific factors were each found to be important explanatory factors. Obviously, attention is drawn to the geographic explanations (given the disciplinary basis of the thesis); however, care should be taken not to overestimate the significance of geographic explanations, relative to the other types of explanation. Indeed, some of the most significant points were beyond the realm of geographic explanation. Thus, of the lone parent specific cleavages, childcare seems to be more important (8.3.4e) than previous marital status (8.3.4a) and family structure

(8.3.2c) seems to be a more important cleavage than gender (8.3.2b) for the demographic variables. These generalisations are important points to make; however, sight must not be lost of the thesis' objective of teasing out the contribution of domain-specific explanations, e.g. just because economic status is the source of many more differences among lone parents than gender, the significance of the instances where gender matters must not be overlooked.

In studying the pattern of responses comment was made as to why these cleavages among lone parents should exist. Clearly, these are relationship specific and no general concluding point can be made. However, the provisional nature of the results discussed within this chapter must be acknowledged. Indeed, this is akin to a shadow that looms behind every insight made within 8.3. That is, the bivariate relationships discussed within this chapter do not necessarily explain QoL. Some of the bivariate relationships discussed within the chapter will be the product of an interaction effect (4.5). Thus, chapter eight should be regarded as the foundations upon which the explanation for QoL is based; to reach this conclusive explanation, it is necessary to conduct a multivariate analysis of (possible) explanations for QoL.

Notes

1) In the thesis, sub-groups and sub-types have different meanings. Both comprise of those variables which were used to explain differences in QoL opinion (the response variable). Sub-types are single-variate categories drawn from one explanatory variable, e.g. teenagers (univariate) from the age variable (explanatory variable). Sub-groups are multi-variate categories drawn from at least two explanatory variables, e.g. teenage mothers (bivariate) from the age and sex explanatory variables or teenage mothers with one child (multivariate) from the age, sex and number of children explanatory variables.

2) Of course, the C.S.A.'s campaign does not lead to an increase in the income of lone parents on income support; rather, it saves the Treasury money by reducing the welfare contributions of the State in accordance with the absent parent's maintenance contribution.

3) In particular, the responses for family life are significant; *virtually all* lone parents consider family life to be very important (Figure 8.1, Table 6.6) and it is the domain with which lone parents are *most* satisfied (Figure 8.1, Table 6.8). This positive self-portrayal of lone parent 'family life' contrasts with the general public's depiction of the lone parent family as a threat to family life and as a contributory factor to child delinquency) & indiscipline. The *relative* status of family life against other domains is interesting, but hardly surprising; the heightened responsibility placed on the parent during lone parenthood largely explains why family life should be the most important aspect of their life and the negative change experienced in many other areas of life make it more likely that family life is a *relatively* more positive aspect of their life. What is more significant is the *absolute* ratings for satisfaction. The finding that lone parents are satisfied with their family life is an important contribution to that part of the policy debate which seeks to reduce the number of lone parent families; it is clear that within this debate the opinions of lone parents are ignored. Lone parents are satisfied

with the most important aspect of their life. Financial (dis)incentives aiming to encourage lone parents to re-partner or to discourage lone parent formation, offer lone parents the opportunity to improve their conditions of life on concerns which are of less importance to them, while jeopardising their satisfaction with the aspect of their life that concerns them most of all. If a concern for the welfare of lone parents is to lie at the heart of policy interventions, then there is a need to challenge the basis of current policy initiatives.

4. Social class groupings are those used in the 1991 G.B. Census of Population.

CHAPTER NINE

EXPLAINING LONE PARENTS' QUALITY OF LIFE

: MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS

9.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the quality of life (hereafter QoL) analysis reaches a conclusion. The previous chapter described and explained the reasons for variations of QoL opinion between lone parents. There the aim was to provide a synthesis of QoL opinion (domain importance, domain satisfaction and overall QoL) for each sub-type of lone parent. Consequently, separate parcels of knowledge pertaining to each dimension of QoL are found in different sections of chapter eight. This knowledge is now synthesised to provide single summaries of the factors (represented in the first instance by profile characteristics) that account for the variations in QoL opinion (there are fourteen such summaries for domain importance, fourteen for domain satisfaction & two for overall QoL). This amounts to more than mere reorganisation of the same data in a different form. Most importantly, the multi-variate nature of the analysis enables the relative significance of explanatory factors to be specified. It becomes possible to assess whether each bivariate relationship discussed in chapter eight, is based on the explanatory factor exerting a direct influence, indirect influence, or indeed, no influence whatsoever on the QoL outcome[1].

The process through which these summaries were generated was discussed at length in chapter 4.5.3c. However, it is useful to summarise the key stages:

1) *Identify Components Of The Multivariate QoL Explanation:* For each dimension of QoL in turn, this refers to those profile characteristics (e.g. age) for which significant (substantially and statistically) differences are found, i.e. those whose categories (e.g. young and old) differ significantly in their QoL opinions.
2) *Specify Relationships Between Components*: All significant (substantially and statistically) associations between these profile characteristics are specified.
3) *Graphical Representation:* A summary diagram is constructed to communicate the relative strengths of the association between profile characteristics and QoL (identified in step 1) and includes details of all significant relationships among profile characteristics(identified in step 2).
4) *Reduction To Explanatory Components:* Each diagram can be reduced to include only those components which perform an explanatory function. These explanatory components can be identified by the bold typeface and the bold arrows of influence in the summary diagram..

Reaching summary explanations for QoL is the object of this chapter. The analysis is conducted for overall QoL (9.2) and for specific domains (9.3). For each domain, multi-variate explanation are given for importance and satisfaction. Section 9.4 draws to a conclusion the nature of lone parent QoL.

9.2 LONE PARENT QUALITY OF LIFE : A MULTI-VARIATE ANALYSIS

In this section, the main concern is to explain why lone parents experience the QoL that they do. However, the research uses two measures of overall QoL, i.e. the single measure model (hereafter SMQoL model) and the multiple additive measure model (hereafter MAQoL model). While the finding that the QoL *responses* are consistent across these models (8.2.2b) suggests that the *explanations* for overall QoL will also be consistent, it is useful to verify this/consider discrepancies prior to the data interpretation proper.

9.2.1 BETWEEN TWO MODELS

The two multivariate explanations for QoL are compared in terms of their general structure (9.2.1a) and their specific component composition (9.2.1b).

9.2.1a General Explanatory Structure

Figures 9.1a[2] and 9.1b present explanations (inter-variable association maps) for the two models of overall QoL. It is readily apparent that they are very similar in character.

First, both explanations are *complex*, i.e. the components of the models are highly interrelated. In relative terms, the MAQoL model is the most complex, i.e. there are more links between components. However, degrees of difference should not detract from the shared complexity. Thus, explaining the QoL of lone parents is not a straightforward interpretation of bivariate relationships; rather, explanation requires detailed analysis of multivariate links.

Second, both share the same general *structure*, i.e. a limited number of components which are closely associated with overall QoL (at the 99.5% probability level), several more components which are slightly less closely associated with overall QoL (at the 99% level) with a majority of the components being statistically significant at the 95% level. Therefore, in both cases, there are one or two cleavages among lone parents that are exceptionally important in accounting for QoL.

Third, there are a large *number* of components in each (nine in the MAQoL model and ten in the SMQoL model). This characteristic compounds the complexity of the models. Furthermore, the number of components that fulfil an explanatory function are also similar (six for the MAQoL model and five for the SMQoL model).

Figure 9.1a
Lone Parent QoL (Single Measure) : A Multi-Variate Analysis

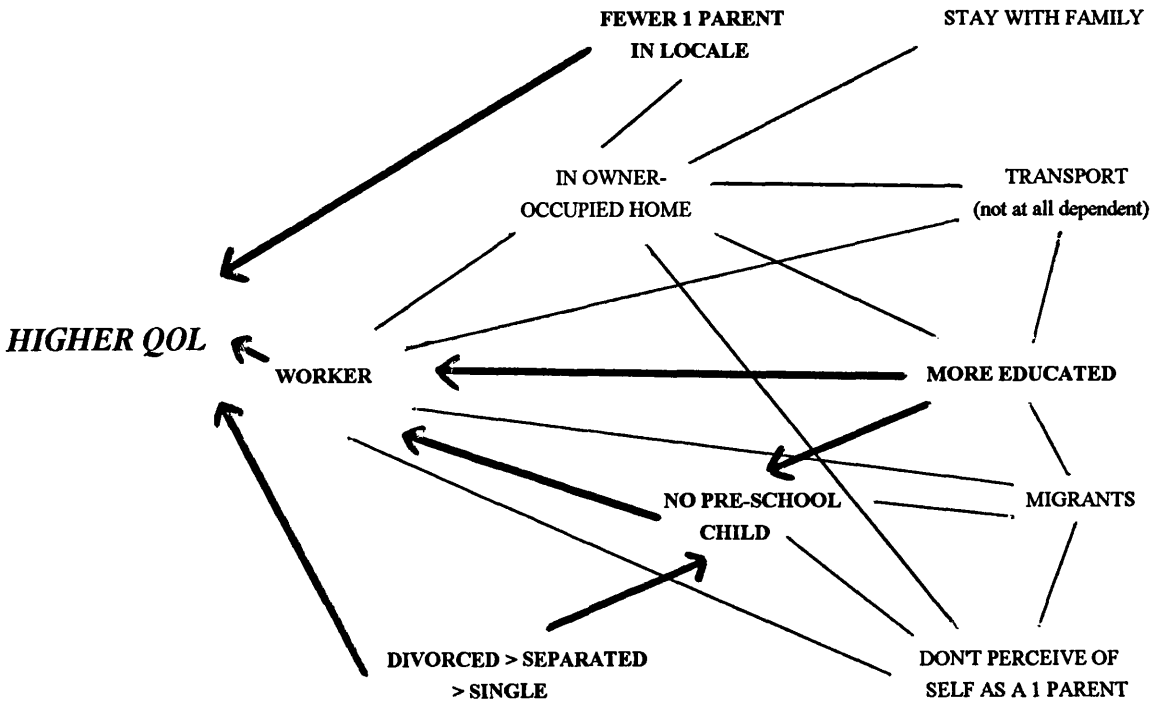
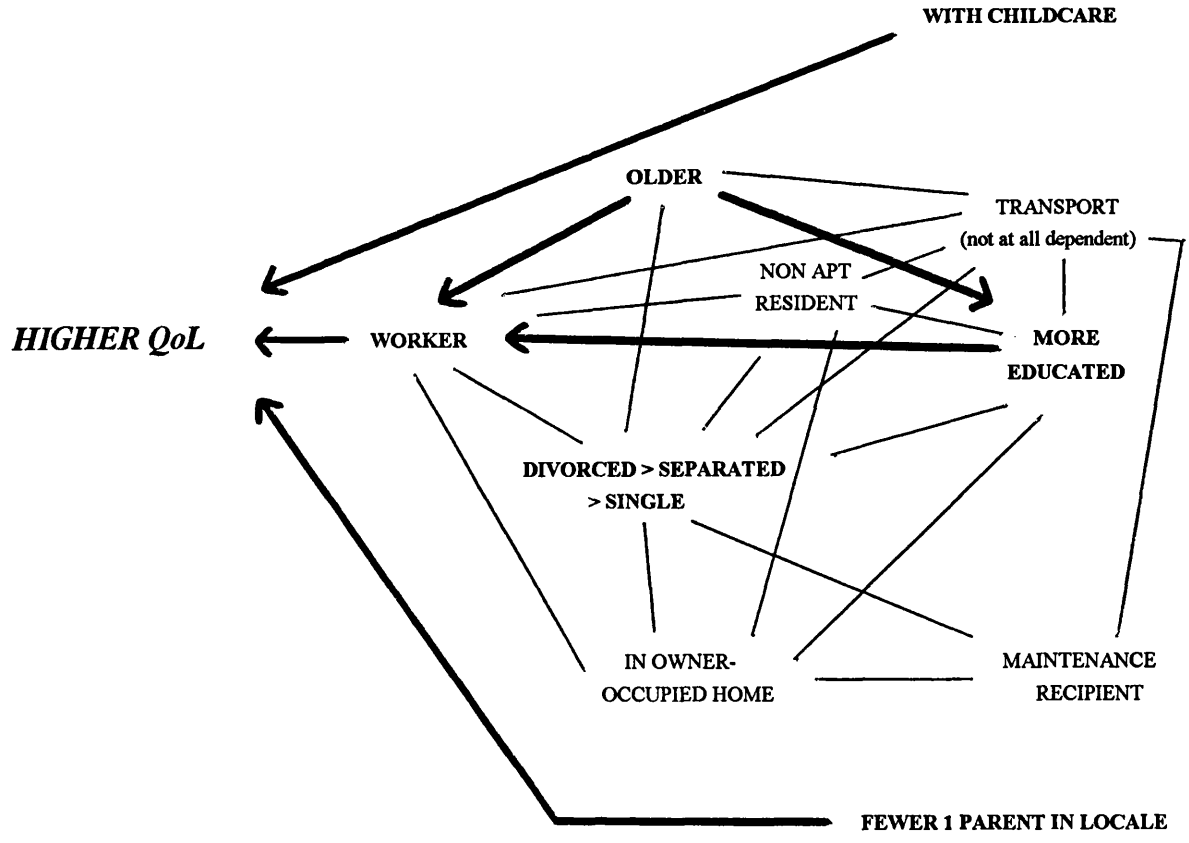


Figure 9.1b
Lone Parent QoL (Multiple Additive Model) : A Multi-Variate Analysis



Fourth, despite the large number of components, each consists of only three pathways[3], i.e. direct influences upon QoL; from work status, previous marital status and the lone parent character of the residential environment in the SMQoL model (Figure 9.1a) and from work status, childcare availability and the lone parent character of the residential environment in the MAQoL model (Figure 9.1b). The nature of these are discussed more fully in 9.2.2.

Thus, at this general level, both explanations for overall QoL are very similar, i.e. each is characteristically complex; has the same general structure; has a large number of (explanatory) components and has a limited number of separate pathways through which QoL is influenced. However, the same general explanatory structure could disguise qualitative differences in the nature of explanation, e.g. the explanatory components could be different or, if not, could influence the QoL outcome in different ways. Thus, it is necessary to compare the actual components contained within.

9.2.1b Components By Model of Overall QoL

Despite the reservations raised above, there appears to be more similarity than difference between the component parts of each explanatory framework. Thus, the number of childcare options, age of the lone parent, deprivation status of local area and maintenance arrangements are only found within the explanatory framework of the MAQoL model (Figure 9.1b) and family structure, tenancy status, and perceived status are only found within the explanatory structure of the SMQoL model (Figure 9.1a).; the majority of components in each explanatory framework also feature in the alternative account, i.e. work status, previous marital status, tenure status, transport, educational attainment, proportion of lone parents in the local area and migration behaviour are found in both.

However, as the aim of the multi-variate analysis is to explain lone parent QoL, the two frameworks should be compared in terms of those components which perform an explanatory function (explanatory components) and those whose presence within the explanatory framework merely reflects an association with an explanatory component and not an explanation for overall QoL. Once again, the similarities are readily apparent. Thus, two of the three components that were unique to the SMQoL model (tenancy and perceived status) and two of the four unique components of the MAQoL model (deprivation status and maintenance arrangement) do not help explain lone parent QoL. While almost half of the common components do not help explain QoL, i.e. tenure, transport and migration, this does not alter the balance that more explanatory components are common to both (compared to the number of unique components in each). Thus, of the six explanatory components of the MAQoL model and the five explanatory components for the SMQoL model, four are common to both. Furthermore, the nature of the 'unique' explanatory components are of a similar character. That is, the age of lone parent (MAQoL model) and family structure (SMQoL model) are both demographic characteristics.

In conclusion, not only are the two models of overall QoL of the same general character (9.2.1a), but the majority of the actual components/explanatory components are also shared. Thus, the second of the two questions posed at the outset of 9.2 has been answered, i.e. the essential character of the

explanations for QoL are the same and the differences do not impinge greatly upon their explanatory function. Consequently, explaining lone parents' QoL can progress largely unhindered by reference to two competing explanations.

9.2.2 EXPLAINING LONE PARENT QUALITY OF LIFE

Why do lone parents experience the QoL that they do? As was observed in 9.2.1a, lone parent QoL is the outcome of four independent process (known as pathways[3]). There are four pathways to lone parent QoL, i.e. socio-economic, marital status, geographical (lone parent related) and childcare-related.

As was demonstrated in the previous chapter being employed exerts a strong positive impact on the QoL experienced by lone parents (8.3.1a). Figure 9.1 supplements this knowledge in two important ways. First, it is readily apparent that work status is the characteristic most closely associated with lone parent QoL. However, a second point to note is that lone parent's work status is, in turn, influenced by education level; educated parents are more likely to work (Figure 5.10) and demographic character; older lone parents or those with less children are more likely to work. While these are the key explanatory factors for this first pathway (work status, education status and age-based differences), it should be noted how these lead to a whole series of divisions among lone parents in terms of QoL, e.g. in the MAQoL explanatory framework, because work status influences whether lone parents live in areas with deprivation (workers are less likely to do so), deprivation area status is also associated with lone parent QoL (those residing outside deprivation areas are more likely to experience a higher QoL).

The pathway to QoL via previous marital status is not consistent between the two explanations (Figure 9.1). First, the population divisions differ; in the MAQoL model, differences can be discerned between divorced, separated and single never-married lone parents, while in the SMQoL model, separated and single never-married have a comparable QoL that, in turn, differs to that of divorced lone parents.

The second pathway toward QoL is via the lone parent character of the area, i.e. where there are fewer lone parents in the local area, a higher QoL experienced by lone parents. Reasons supporting the claim have been posited in 8.3.3c, where it was suggested that more positive experiences of life owe more to the characteristic of the areas in which lone parents are most likely to reside, rather than to the proximity to other lone parents. That is, lone parents' QoL is influenced by the (general character of) the area in which they reside. As for work status, this conclusion is verified by triangulated measurement, i.e. it applies to both models of QoL.

A third difference concerns the nature of the explanatory function; in the SMQoL model, previous marital status exerts a direct influence on QoL (divorced lone parents have a higher QoL than both separated and single never-married lone parents), whereas, in the MAQoL model, marital status exerts a direct influence upon work status, which, in turn, influences QoL (divorced are more likely

to work [and have a higher QoL] than separated, who, in turn, are more likely to work [and have a higher QoL] than single never-married lone parents). As the means of verification is triangulation, the relative accuracy of these accounts cannot be assessed with certainty. Less confidence should be placed on this claim, given that it is not verified by triangulation (it does not feature in the SMQoL model). However, triangulated measurement most certainly verifies that divorced lone parents experience a higher QoL than separated and never-married lone parents and that the entry route into lone parenthood has a real influence on the QoL experienced by lone parents.

The fourth and final pathway featured in the MAQoL model, i.e. lone parents who use childcare experience a higher QoL than those who do not; without access to childcare support, lone parents' workload (family responsibilities) are so much greater; the potential for 'quality' is greatly reduced when the pressures of this work are most intensive.

Without question, the most significant explanation for QoL is work-related. This is verified by triangulation and is also the explanation which is most closely associated with QoL. According to these twin-criteria, the order of relative importance among the other explanations are area-effect, previous marital status, then childcare availability.

What then is the wider significance of these findings? There is consistency between objective conditions (lone parents being a largely deprived population group) and subjective interpretation of these conditions (economic explanations for lone parents' QoL opinions are writ large). Thus, the single most important factor reducing the QoL of lone parents is non participation within the labour market. It follows that to increase labour market participation, would raise the overall QoL among the lone parent population. Additional insights into lone parents' labour market participation are also provided within Figure 9.1b, i.e. maturity and education are associated with greater rates of labour market participation. The latter point seems to be suggestive of a strategy through which lone parents' labour market opportunities could be improved, i.e. by educating/training. However, as was discussed earlier (5.4.1c), education experience tends to predate lone parenthood; the implication being that the effectiveness of educating *lone parents* to increase labour market chances is unproven. Even more negative conclusions are to be drawn from the second factor that is associated with labour market participation, i.e. older lone parents and those with older children are more likely to work. Clearly, there are more limited opportunities for *direct* interventions to increase labour market opportunities on this count! However, there are possibilities for *indirect* interventions to compensate for the problems associated with labour market participation for those with young families, i.e. childcare opportunities can be improved. In Britain, the introduction of a childcare subsidy for working lone parents in the October budget of 1993 was an important Government initiative along these lines. However, childcare provision is still worse in Britain, relative to other industrialised nations (Moss 90). Better childcare provision is still required and, as earlier results in the thesis have shown, there is much demand for these services (an example of strategies to provide lone parents with opportunities to better themselves) among lone parents who do not work (8.3.4e).

While the economic basis to lone parents' QoL is of the utmost importance, this type of explanation for QoL is not unique to lone parents (Gitmez & Morcol 94). However, the subsidiary explanations

(previous marital status, area effect [lone parent related] and childcare experiences) all point to the significance of *lone parent specific* explanations for QoL. To comprehensively understand the QoL of this particular deprived population group, requires careful examination of issues, or aspects of issues, that would be insignificant to other populations. This particular finding confirms the expectations set forth in the introductory chapter of the thesis; QoL research can profit from a more subject-specific approach (1.4). the second major hypothesis the thesis set out to address, i.e. whether explanations for QoL vary according to the aspect of QoL under consideration, will now be addressed in the remainder of the chapter.

9.3 LONE PARENT QUALITY OF LIFE AT DOMAIN LEVEL : MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS

9.3.1 FINANCIAL SITUATION

Figures 9.2 and 9.3 show that certain cohorts of lone parent are more likely to be satisfied with their financial situation and consider that this is important. However, not all of these contribute toward the explanation of why differences of opinion exist; almost half of the components in the domain satisfaction summation are only within the explanatory framework by virtue of an association with another component which makes a more significant explanatory contribution (e.g. the number of childcare options is influenced by the age of children within the family - families with younger children requiring and receiving more childcare - it is the age of children that contributes toward the explanation and not the number of childcare options per se. This is also a feature of transport dependency, tenancy, type of financial problem, maintenance and perceived status for the evaluative dimension of domain QoL (Figure 9.2) and for social class for the definitional dimension (Figure 9.1). Consequently, it is found that a similar number of components perform explanatory functions, i.e. eight factors explain lone parents' satisfaction with their financial situation and six factors explain how importantly lone parents consider their financial situation to be. The complexity of the explanatory frameworks necessitate a multi-variate analysis, i.e. there is a considerable number of significant relationships between components.

9.3.1a Importance of Financial Situation

Socio-economic factors feature prominently in the explanation for the importance of their financial situation, i.e. those in less advantageous socio-economic positions (e.g. those who do not work, have low educational attainment, who rent & who do not provide for most of their transportation needs) are more concerned. That those with less resources should be more concerned with their financial situation is not an unexpected result. However, as Figure 9.2 shows, explanation should not be reduced to a straightforward relationship between financial circumstance (as indicated by work status) and financial importance; rather, the associated socio-economic traits of transport dependency, tenure status and educational status are all more closely associated with the QoL outcome than work status, i.e. each contributes to the explanation in their own right.

Nevertheless, work status performs a crucial explanatory role, i.e. the primary explanations of transport & housing status are themselves strongly influenced by work status (Figure 9.2). Thus, while both of these 'primary explanations' are more closely associated with lone parent opinion than

Figure 9.2
Importance of Financial Situation : A Multi-Variate Analysis

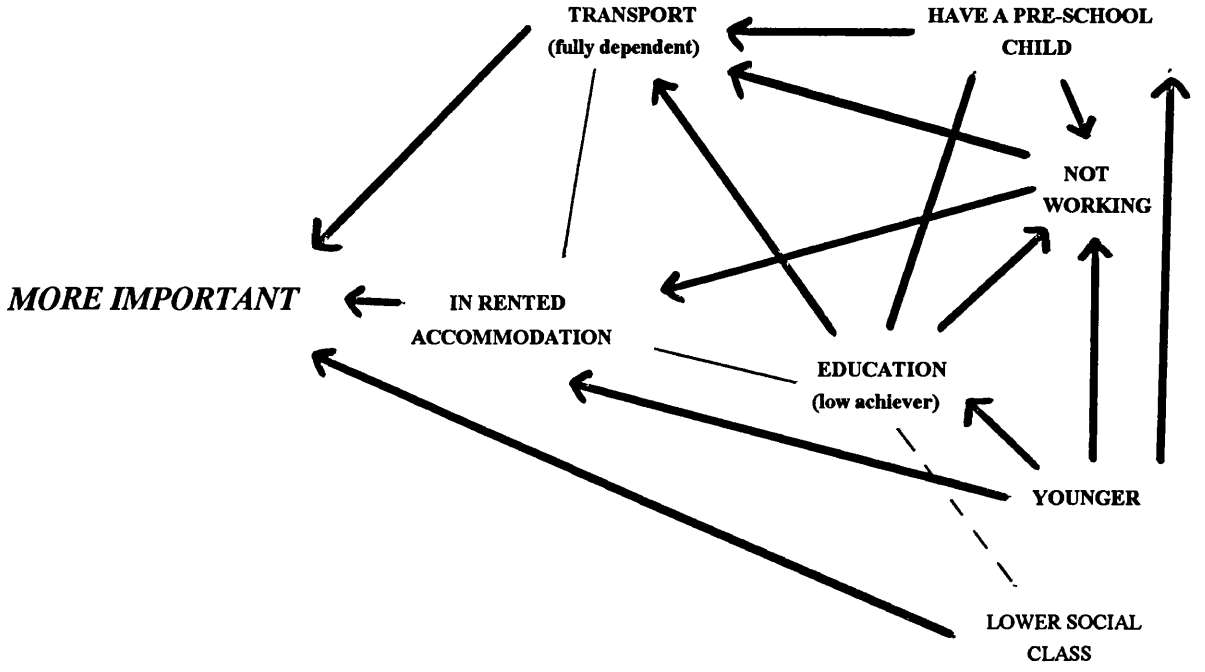
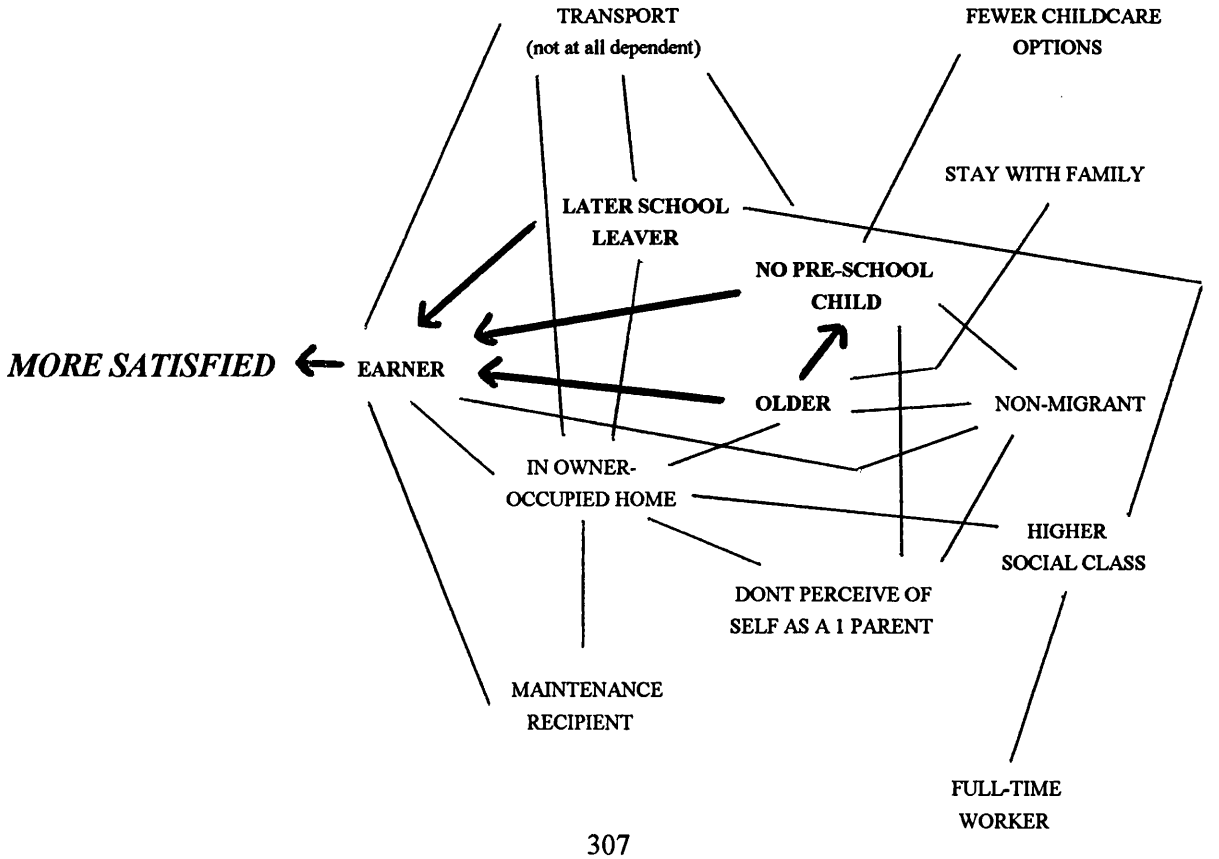


Figure 9.3
Satisfaction With Financial Situation : A Multi-Variate Analysis



work status, part of their explanatory potential is attributable to this very factor (workers with their earning capacity are more able to purchase a home and own a vehicle). The utility and complexity of a multi-variate perspective is readily apparent.

This is not to imply that the explanatory framework is beyond simplification. On the contrary, the array of associations between explanatory components can be reduced thus: demographic characteristics (age and family structure) influence socio-economic characteristics (work, education & housing status [age] and transport & work status [family structure]). In turn, education and work status influence other socio-economic outcomes, the end result of which is that opinions are directly influenced by transport status, housing status and among workers, social class.

In summary, socio-economic status largely accounts for how important financial situation is judged to be. While explanation should not be reduced to financial circumstance, it is nevertheless the case that a lack of financial resources performs an important explanatory role. Similarly, demographic character and education status are important for their role in explaining differences of opinion among lone parents.

9.3.1b Satisfaction With Financial Situation

Despite the visual complexity of the explanatory framework for financial satisfaction (Figure 9.3), it is reducible to a small number of key components. As for the importance of financial situation, the core of this explanation involves socio-economic status and demographic character. In contrast however, financial circumstance is most closely associated with the outcome, i.e. those who are in a more advantageous financial position are more satisfied with their financial situation. Indeed, this is the only point through which satisfaction with their financial situation can be increased; to increase satisfaction must always involve an improvement in their financial situation. Tenure and transport status still feature within the explanatory framework, but their explanatory potential is much weaker than before and should be interpreted as outcomes of financial circumstance. Demographic factors (age & family structure) still perform their 'secondary' explanatory role, as does educational status. However, the most striking feature of this explanatory framework is the large number of non-explanatory components; indeed, despite the visual complexity the core explanation is simpler for financial satisfaction compared to financial importance.

9.3.2 OTHERS' ATTITUDE TOWARD THEM

The basis for disagreement among the lone parent population over the importance of others' attitude and their satisfaction with others' attitude is similar, i.e. economic status and family characteristics are the key cleavages (Figures 9.4 and 9.5). However, beyond this general observation, the nature of explanation differs. That is, for the level of importance, there are more independent influences, there

Figure 9.4
Importance of Others' Attitude : A Multi-Variate Analysis

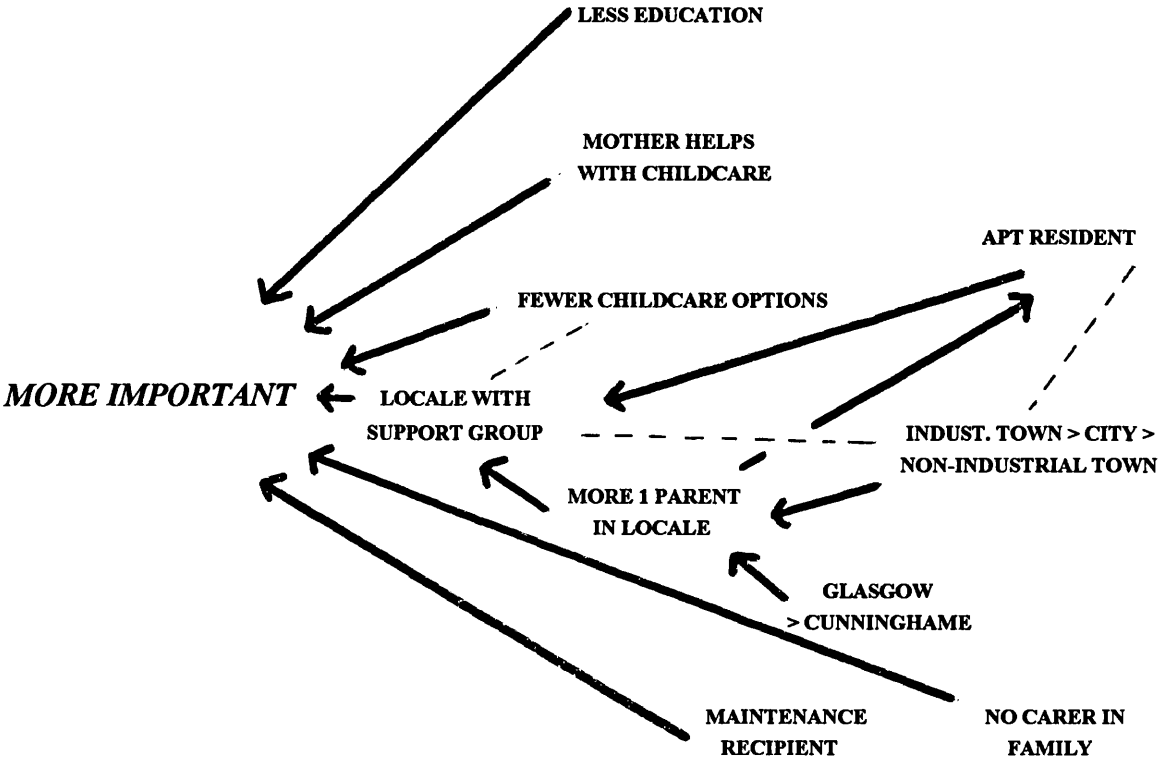
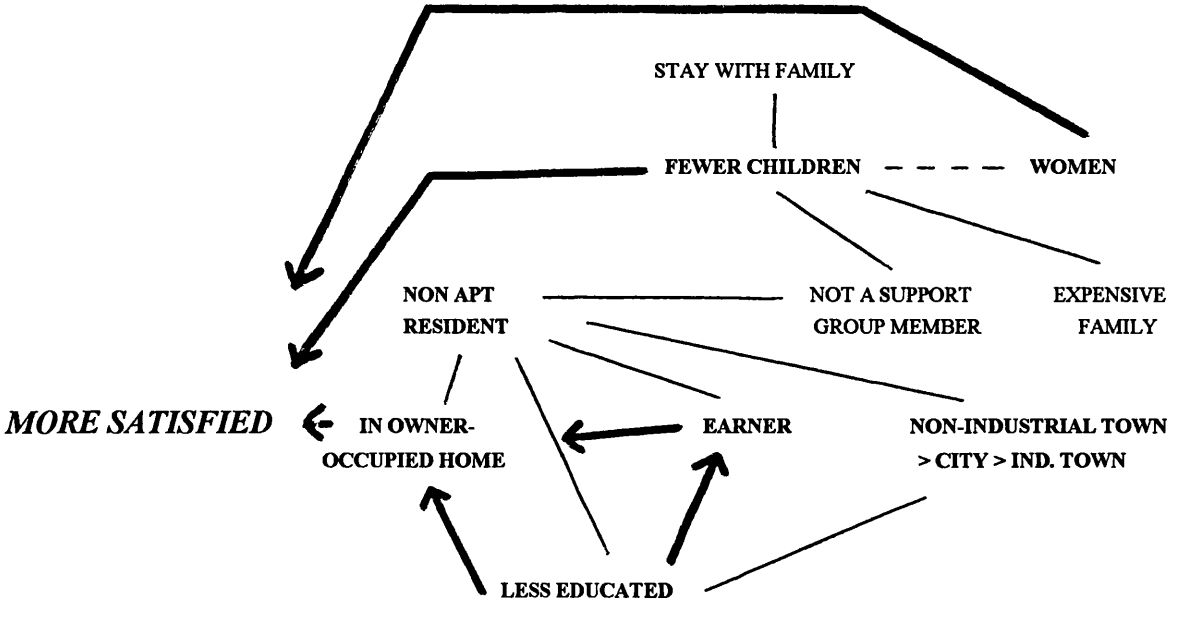


Figure 9.5
Satisfaction With Others' Attitude : A Multi-Variate Analysis



are more explanations that are closely associated with this outcome and more of the significant associations perform an explanatory function.

9.3.2a Importance of Others' Attitude Toward Them

The opinions of others was the life domain with which lone parents were least concerned (Table 6.6). However, this does not preclude differences of opinion and indeed, as Figure 9.4 shows such differences do exist for many sub-types of lone parent. However, there are three main factors that account for how importantly lone parents regard others' attitude. First, and most importantly, geographical context is a source of difference. Part of the increased concern will be attributable to the general character of residential location; as Figure 9.4 shows, those lone parents living in a deprivation area are more concerned. In part, this will reflect the stigma of living in a deprivation area. However, this alone is insufficient to account for the geographical variation. It is the lone parent character of the place of residence which is most closely associated with lone parent opinion. Lone parents who live in areas with more lone parents and areas with lone parent support groups are more concerned. While this may be partly accounted by the fact that a high lone parent presence is more prevalent in areas of deprivation, Figure 9.4 shows that it also exerts an independent effect (it is more closely associated with importance than deprivation area status). The geography of lone parenthood is not only interesting in its own right (as an outcome), it also contributed to the lived experiences of lone parents (expressed in terms of QoL outlook).

Beyond geographical variation, childcare, family structure and economic status all help explain the variation. Most significant here is the contradictory nature of socio-economic insights. On one hand socio-economic advantage is associated with heightened concern over what others' think (maintenance recipients), while on the other, it is disadvantage that is associated with heightened concern (less educated). This is clear evidence of the utility of considering *each* population traits independently, rather than part of a multivariate composite.

9.3.2b Satisfaction With Others' Attitude Toward Them

Socio-economic factors have a more important and a more consistent influence on lone parents' experience of others' attitude; socio-economic disadvantage is most closely associated with dissatisfaction. Interestingly, it is tenure status that is the most significant socio-economic explanation. The 'independent' influence of tenure reflects those lone parents with other socio-economic disadvantages (not earning, not educated) who reside with others in owner-occupied accommodation. Significantly, the population character also features as an explanation in Figure 9.5. thus, there is more than material advantage to be gained by sharing accommodation with others.

Independently of socio-economic status, family structure (fewer children) and gender (women) are associated with higher satisfaction. While less important than socio-economic explanations, the

significance of each is heightened by the fact that these are significantly inter-related in a contradictory fashion, i.e. women are more likely to have more children in lone parent families. Once again, the analysis of others' attitude has demonstrated the utility of a multivariate perspective, i.e. what appears to be an explanation of subsidiary importance (gender), takes on added significance when the other components of the explanation are considered.

9.3.3 HOUSING

There is considerably more agreement among lone parents over the importance of housing than there is over how satisfied they are with their housing; ten sub-types of lone parent hold significant differences of opinion for the former, compared to five for the latter (Figures 9.6 and 9.7). A second difference is that there is explanatory components for the evaluative component are much more inter-related. Furthermore, seven of these components fulfil an explanatory function. Thus, the need for multi-variate analysis is particularly acute for housing satisfaction.

9.3.3a Importance of Housing

While there are no sub-types of lone parent who are markedly more concerned with housing than others, it is significant that the greatest differences are expressed according to family size, i.e. lone parents with more children are more concerned with their housing situation. Clearly, such lone parents will have less flexibility in their search for housing, thus heightening the level of concern over this issue. Beyond this demographic distinction, there is evidence that lone parents who experience less socio-economic advantage (among workers, those who are in lower class occupations and those who cannot provide for their own transportation needs) are more concerned. Interestingly, the absence of a worker/non-worker distinction shows that the socio-economic strata most concerned are not the *least* disadvantaged (workers of a higher class occupation are not as concerned as workers of a lower social class), nor the *most* disadvantaged (workers are no more likely to be concerned then those without work). This may be a reflection of the adequacy of housing provision (or, at least, the availability) of housing for lone parents without means of support and the ability of those with a higher income to finance adequate housing, i.e. those lone parents who are most concerned are those who must finance their own housing from limited financial resources.

9.3.3b Satisfaction With Housing

Economic circumstance and geographical location are closely associated with how satisfied lone parents are with their housing. Interestingly, economic resources are more significant than tenure status (economic outcome). Thus, lone parents in rented accommodation with greater economic

Figure 9.6
Importance of Housing : A Multi-Variate Analysis

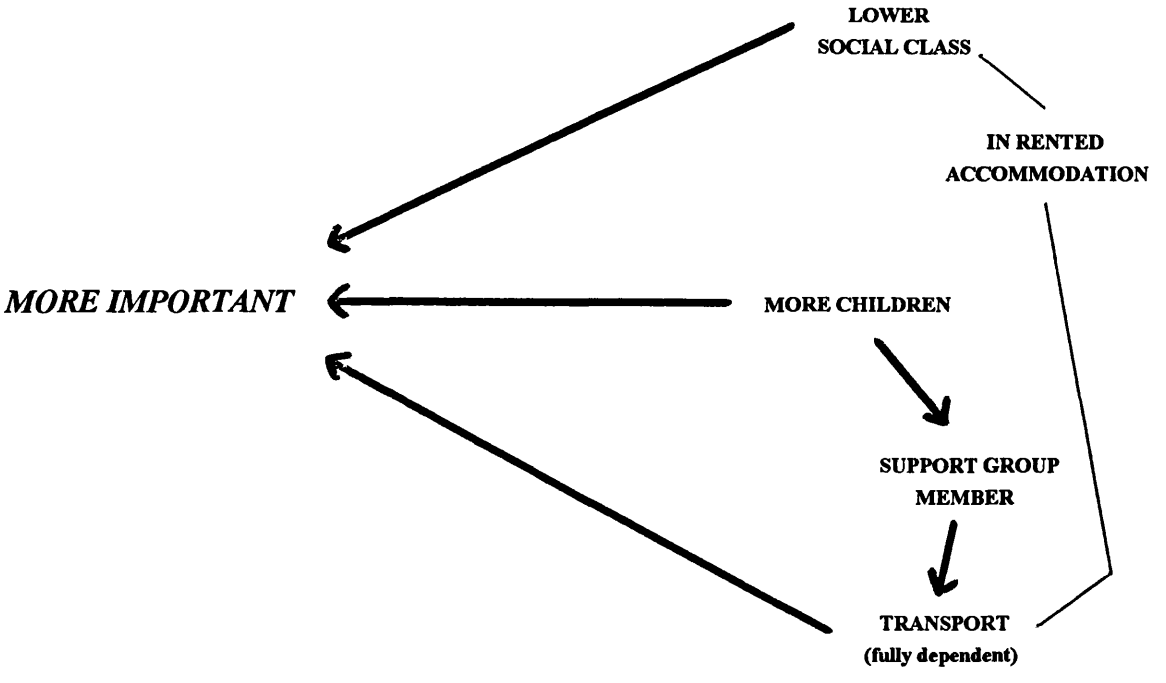
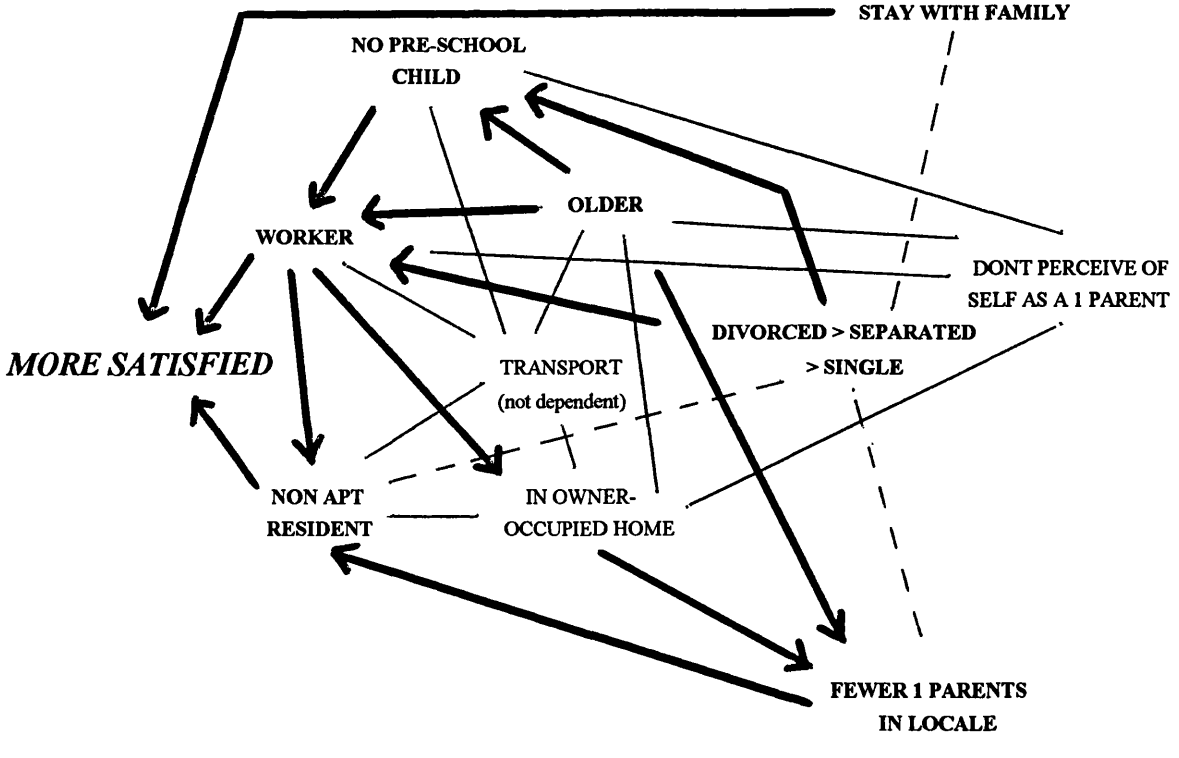


Figure 9.7
Satisfaction With Housing : A Multi-Variate Analysis



resources are among the group of lone parents who are most satisfied with their housing. Once again, sight should not be lost of the role played by demographic status in determining economic status (and hence satisfaction with housing). A second insight from the multivariate analysis is that the socio-economic status of the residential location also contributes an explanatory role, i.e. it is not merely a by-product of economic status. Thus, the conditions of the housing in Strathclyde's most deprived housing estate is such that lone parents within these areas are more likely to be dissatisfied than lone parents of similar socio-economic status residing outside these areas. Finally, sharing accommodation leads to greater satisfaction. While tenure appeared to be a more significant determinant of housing satisfaction (8.3.1c), the multivariate analysis demonstrates the independent influence of tenancy and the lack of explanatory power of tenure. Once more, the positive characteristics of sharing accommodation are clearly evident - although the same cautionary note raised in chapter four still applies.

9.3.4 WORK

As for housing, understanding the differences of opinion among lone parents for domain importance is more straightforward than domain satisfaction, i.e. there are more components within the evaluative framework and these components are more inter-related (Figures 9.8 and 9.9). In both frameworks, the majority of components fulfil an explanatory function; only maintenance, family structure and perceived status are present within the explanatory framework for satisfaction by virtue of an *association* with an explanatory component (Figure 9.9), as is 'friends as childcarers' in the definitional explanatory framework (Figure 9.8). Multi-variate analysis is necessary for domain satisfaction. Brief attention is also paid to domain importance, although bivariate analysis can fulfil most of the explanatory function.

9.3.4a Importance of Work

Almost exclusively, the extent to which work is regarded as important is based on work experiences. As was noted in 8.3.1a, the greatest differences is between workers (more important to those with 'better' employment), rather than between those who work and those who do not. Workers/Non workers is a cleavage among lone parents, but is not as important as that among workers. A role for geographic location in terms of local employment opportunity is also suggested by the inclusion of areal well-being within Figure 9.8. However, on the whole multivariate interpretation contributed little to an understanding of why some lone parents are more likely than others to be concerned with work.

Figure 9.8
Importance of Work : A Multi-Variate Analysis

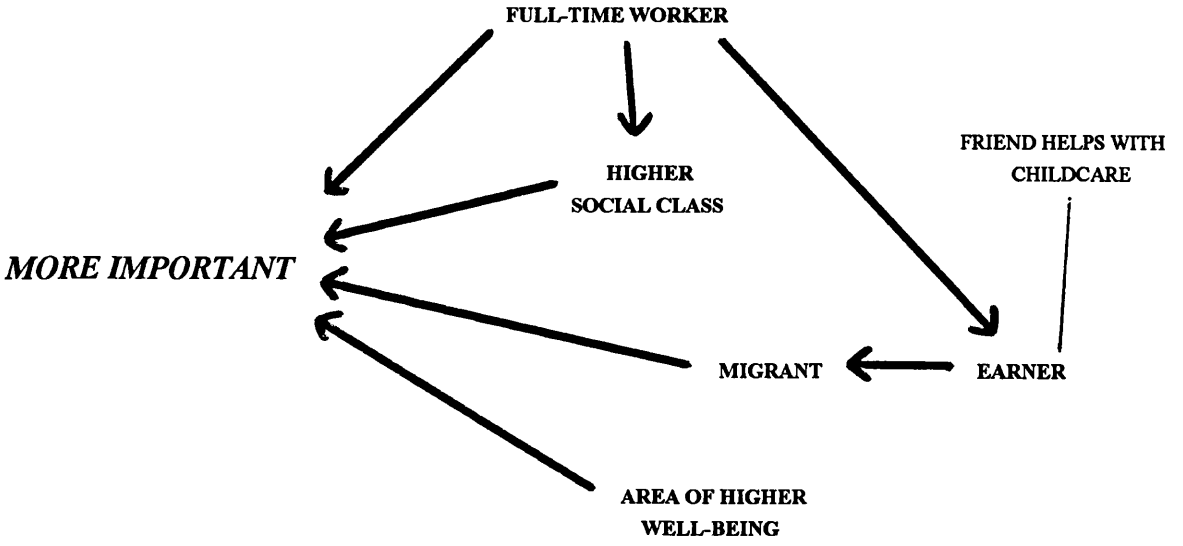
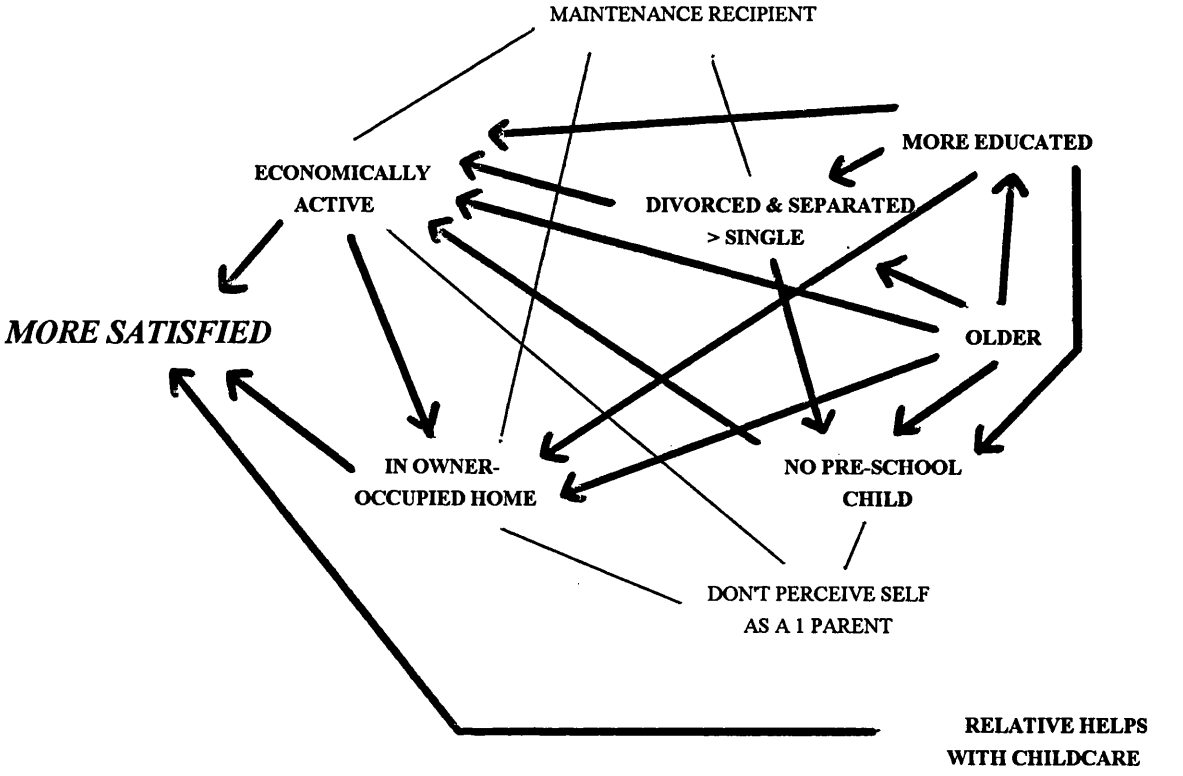


Figure 9.9
Satisfaction With Work : A Multi-Variate Analysis



9.3.4b Satisfaction With Work

In sharp contrast to domain importance, the interpretation of domain satisfaction for work requires a multivariate basis of analysis. indeed, the initial complexity is greatly reduced when an analysis of the inter-component links is undertaken. Thus, economic status (in turn, a reflection of family/demographic status and education status) largely accounts for different experiences among lone parents. That is, the economically advantaged are more satisfied. Work is not a homogeneous experience for lone parents. While the economic explanation is writ large, a subsidiary explanation is also important. Access to childcare (particularly that provided by family) is associated with a more satisfying work experience. Significantly, it is not access to *childcare* per se, but access to *childcare from the family* that is important. This is an important contribution to knowledge for lone parents and work debates. However, it is also demonstrated that lone parents' work experience cannot be examined in the workplace (or on the journey to the workplace) alone. Rather, there is a personal/family context that also contributes to the satisfaction with work. A broader conceptualisation of working life is necessary to capture the essence of lone parents' work experience.

9.3.5 HEALTH

The explanatory framework for health (Figures 9.10 and 9.11) differ quite dramatically; there are a high number (twelve) of component (many sub-type differences of opinion) for evaluation, but only two for definition; one-third for components for evaluation fulfil an explanatory function (number of childcare options transport dependency, support group membership and the presence of a support group in the local area). whereas in definition, both (all) components contribute toward explanation and there are complex inter-relationships between the components for satisfaction, but no component inter-relationships for definition. Indeed, such is the simplicity of the explanatory framework for domain importance, multi-variate analysis does not further the bivariate insights of 8.3.1a and 8.3.4f where explanations were posited for the relationships of earning capacity & lone parent migration behaviour with the importance of health. Consequently, only the evaluative component of health is now discussed.

First impressions are that the explanation for why some lone parents are more satisfied than others with health is very complex (Figure 9.11). Nevertheless, at its most basic it involves two processes which are comparable to those for work (Figure 9.9 in 9.3.4b). First, childcare availability is of subsidiary importance. The reasons why childcare should influence health are less direct, although it is significant to note that it is when lone parents do *not* have access to the support of relatives that they are most satisfied (unlike work). A further complication is that in general access to childcare is associated with higher satisfaction (but *not* that of relatives). The multivariate explanation suggest

Figure 9.10
Importance of Health : A Multi-Variate Analysis

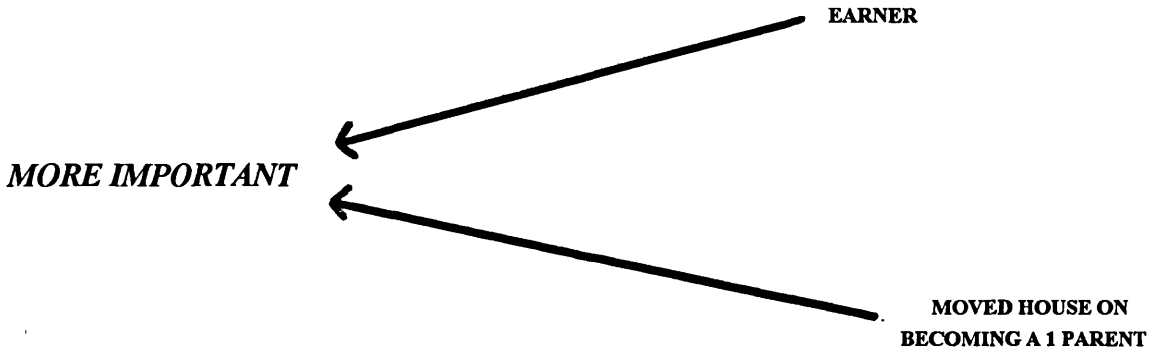
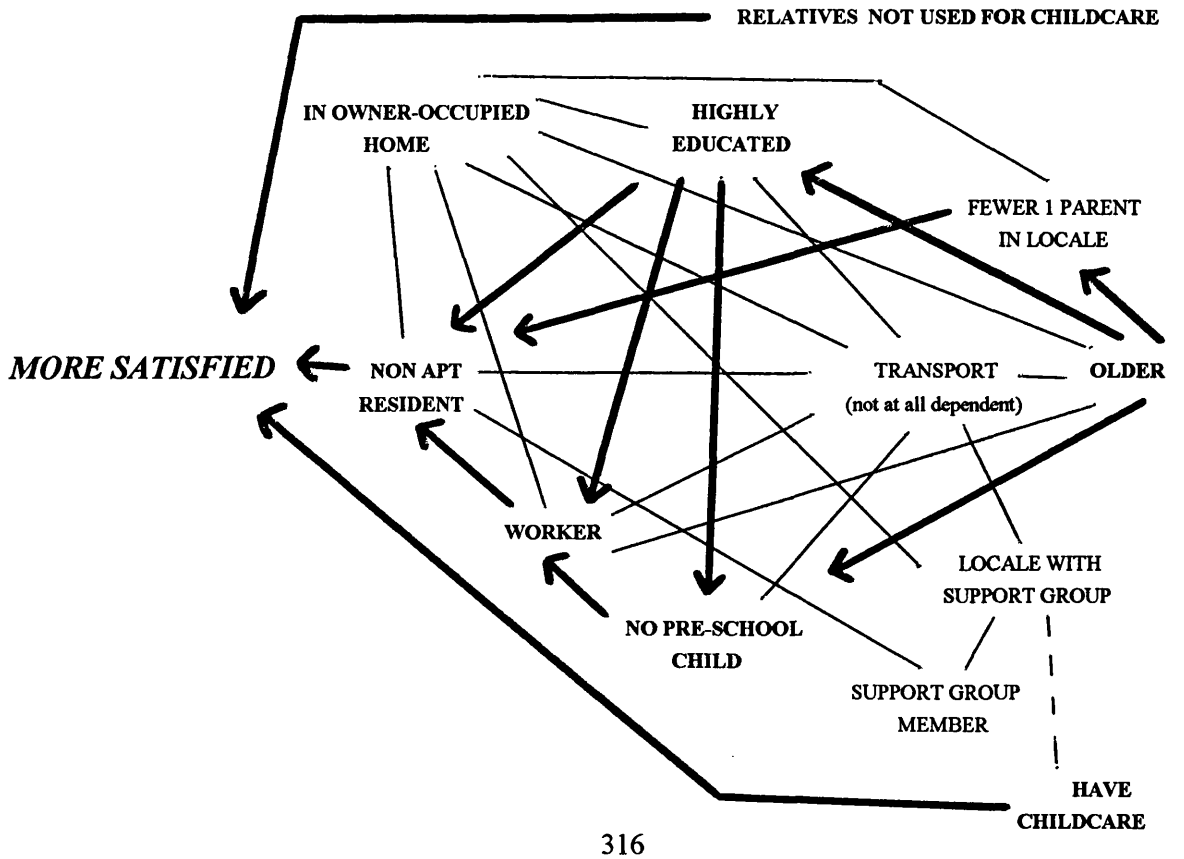


Figure 9.11
Satisfaction With Health : A Multi-Variate Analysis



that childcare exerts an *independent* influence on satisfaction, i.e. there is something about childcare that explains the level of satisfaction. While it is plausible that access to childcare has a *direct* bearing on lone parents' well-being (and is therefore an additional important function of childcare), the reasons why those with the support of relatives should be less satisfied is unclear.

The second line of explanation is similar to that of work in that it involves economic status and demographic/family status. However, it is the geographical place of residence that is most closely associated with health. Living in an area of deprivation contributes (negatively) to the health of lone parents. once again, the geographical context is shown to be an explanatory factor, rather than an outcome of socio-economic status.

9.3.6 CRIME

As for health, explaining domain satisfaction is markedly more complex than domain importance, by virtue of the number of components and the inter-relationships between them (Figures 9.12 and 9.13). Furthermore, only two of the eleven components of the evaluative explanatory framework do not contribute to explanation, i.e. perceived status and family structure. Unlike for health, there is a need for multi-variate analysis of the definitional component, given the presence of association between components.

9.3.6a Importance of Crime

As Figure 9.12 demonstrates, older lone parents are most concerned with crime, which consequently implies that those without a pre-school child will be more concerned (as older lone parents tend not to have pre-school children) which in turn means that those with greater independence in mode of transportation are more concerned (as those without pre-school children are more likely to be independent. Age is clearly the most important explanation for concern over crime; this is consistent with research on the fear of crime among the wider population.

9.3.6b Satisfaction With Crime

Three explanations account for lone parent satisfaction with crime. First, geographical factors are of central importance; lone parents from areas with no support group are more satisfied (Figure 9.13). As was discussed in 8.3.3c, no simple causal inferences should be drawn from this result. nevertheless, the multivariate analysis shows that this characteristic exerts an independent influence on expressed satisfaction with crime. These insights inform more about the formation of lone parent support groups, rather than the geography of the fear of crime. That is, support groups are found not only in areas with more lone parents, or in areas of deprivation, but also in areas where lone

Figure 9.12
Importance of Crime : A Multi-Variate Analysis

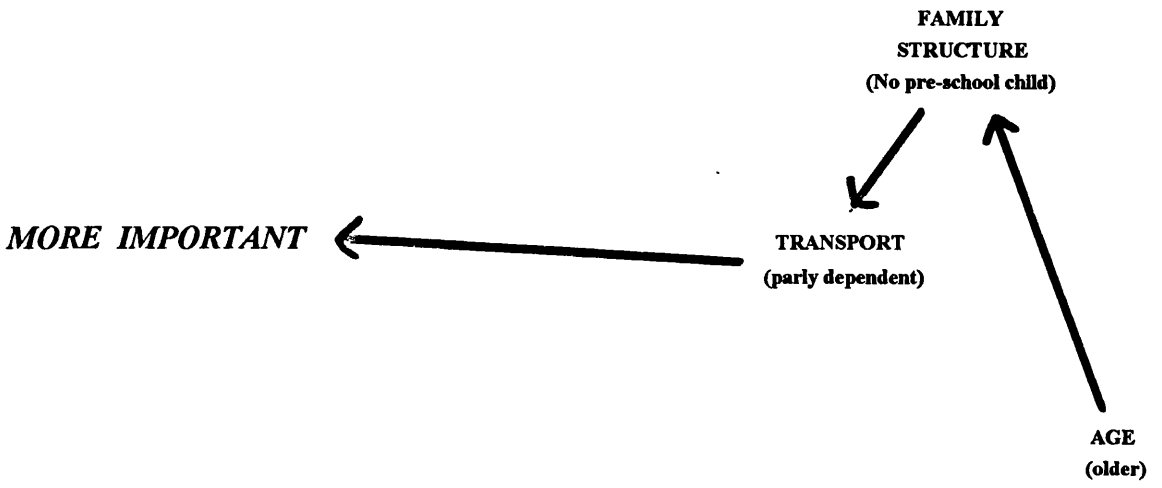
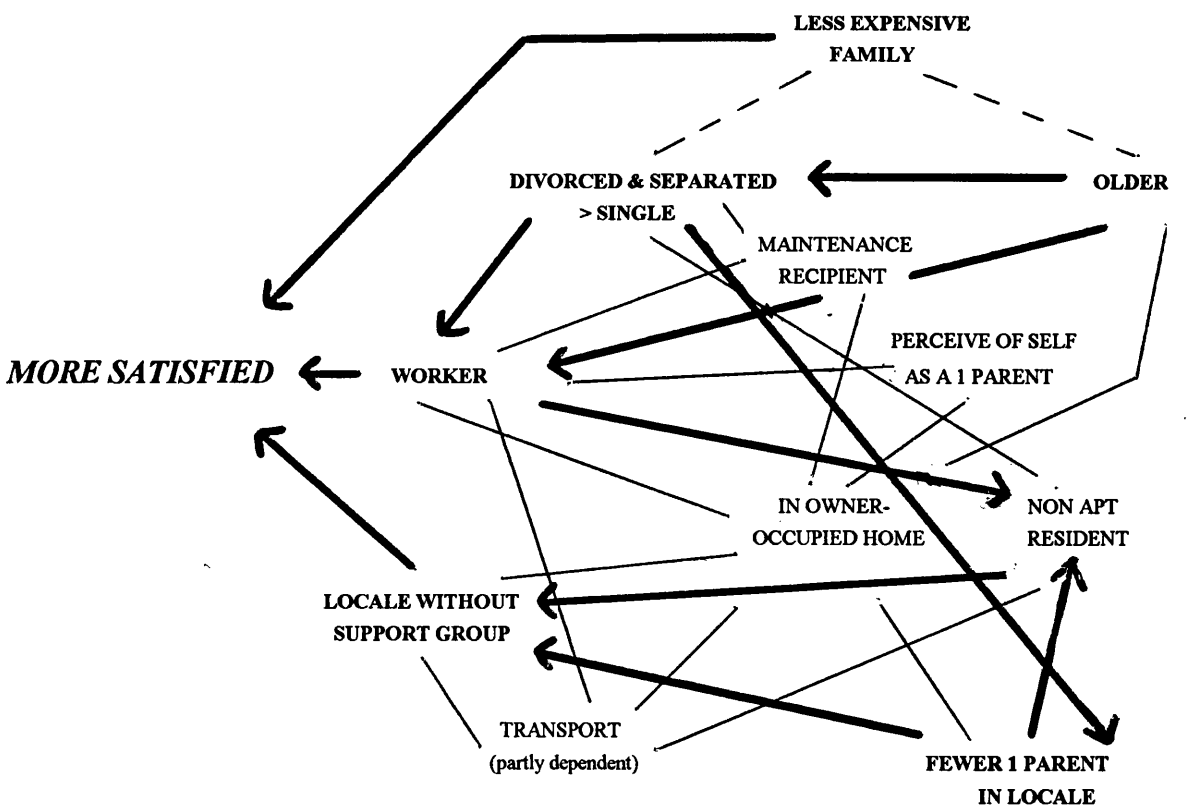


Figure 9.13
Satisfaction With Crime : A Multi-Variate Analysis



parents' satisfaction with crime is lower than that of lone parents living outside these areas. Thus, the formation of lone parent support groups not only reflected the lone parent related demands for support, but also a more general need for support (dissatisfaction with crime) by lone parents in particular areas.

As important as an explanation, but less revealing in its originality, is the (by now typical) finding that economic status (influenced by family/demographic status) is associated with satisfaction. Finally, the structure of the lone parent family, conceived in terms of expenditure requirements also has a direct impact on satisfaction with crime.

9.3.7 OPPORTUNITIES TO BETTER THEMSELVES

Opportunities marks a departure from the life concerns discussed thus far, in that neither explanation is characteristically complex, or comprise of a large number of components (Figures 9.14 and 9.15). Multi-variate links do exist (six for satisfaction and three for importance), but the majority of these do not contribute toward explanation. Of particular note for satisfaction, is the high number of separate routes through which satisfaction is influenced (Figure 9.15).

9.3.7a Importance Of Opportunities To Better Themselves

Education participation is the characteristic most associated with how importantly lone parents regard having opportunities to better themselves; as was discussed in 8.3.1b, those with less education value opportunities the most (Figure 9.14). Indeed, educational participation is the driving force behind the inclusion of other socio-economic traits within the explanatory framework, i.e. tenure and work status. Independently, of the socio-economic composite, working conditions and childcare utilisation are each associated with the QoL outcome.

9.3.7b Satisfaction With Opportunities To Better Themselves

A socio-economic composite also helps explain the level of satisfaction with opportunities, i.e. education status, economic status and the deprivation character of the area of residence. However, three differences are apparent. First, different socio-economic components involved , i.e. tenure only features for importance and deprivation status only features for satisfaction. Second, economic status has an independent explanatory function for satisfaction, whereas, for importance its presence within the explanatory framework is owed to its association with education status. Finally, socio-economic characteristics are not the most significant explanatory components for satisfaction. Rather, the two independent channels of influence, arising from childcare, are more significant, i.e. the presence of a relative as a childcarer and the number of childcare opportunities (reflected both

Figure 9.14
Importance of Opportunities : A Multi-Variate Analysis

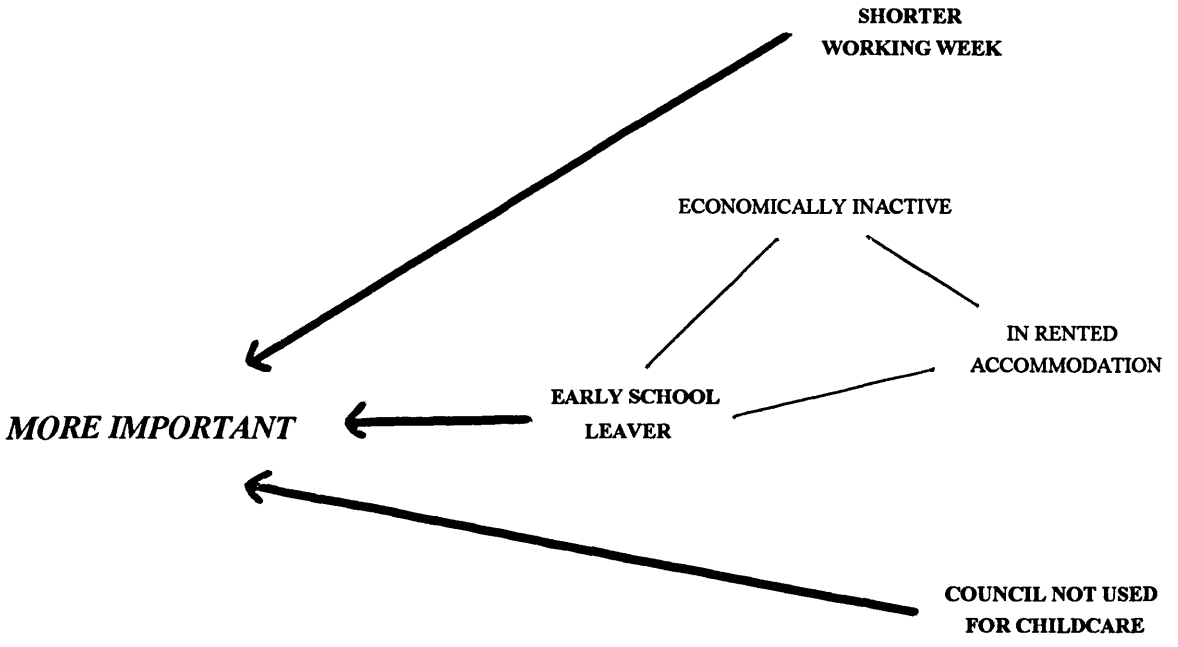
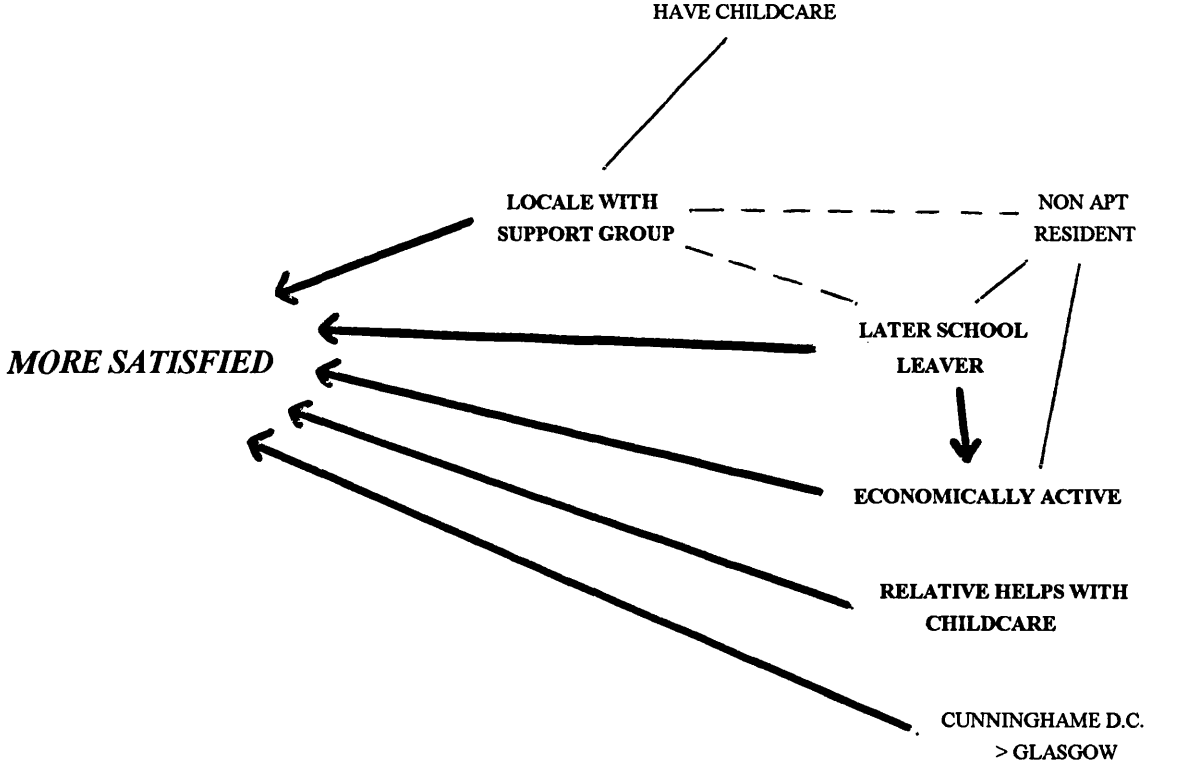


Figure 9.15
Satisfaction With Opportunities : A Multi-Variate Analysis



directly by the number of childcare sources that are used and indirectly by the presence of a lone parent support group in the local area.

In summary, childcare and socio-economic status are largely account for how satisfied lone parents are with opportunities they have to better themselves. This is the same general explanation that accounts for the importance of opportunities. However, in contrast to before, childcare is a more important determinant of whether lone parents are satisfied with the opportunities they have to better themselves.

9.3.8 ADVICE & SUPPORT

In general, the explanatory frameworks of advice & support have a similar structure to those of opportunities, i.e. moderate number of components, inter-relationships that warrant multi-variate analysis even though they are not overly complex, several routes through which the QoL outcome is produced and a minimal number of components which do not perform an explanatory function. However, as the discussion will demonstrate, the context of these explanatory frameworks are markedly different.

9.3.8a Importance of Advice & Support

As would be expected, to a large extent the findings for advice & support confirmed existing hypotheses; members of a lone parent support group are most concerned with the advice & support given to them. While this partly reflects that those with more children are more likely to be members of a support group, the extent to which support group members are more concerned than non group members is such that the character exerts an independent influence. A second 'expected' finding was that women are more concerned than men (Figure 9.16). Finally, migrants are more concerned. However, the multivariate links suggest that it may not be migration per se that accounts for the greatest level of concern. Plausible though the interpretation that migrants would be more likely to need such support as a result of the migration act and the need to rebuild their social networks thereafter. Rather, as those with pre-school children are most likely to be migrants and given that such lone parents are also in need of more support, then the explanatory potential does not solely rest with migration. Thus, while the bivariate relationship confirmed all hypotheses (women, those with more children, support group members, those with pre-school age children and migrants) were all in need of more support, the multivariate analysis demonstrates that for migration, the QoL relationship is partly superficial.

Figure 9.16
Importance of Advice & Support : A Multi-Variate Analysis

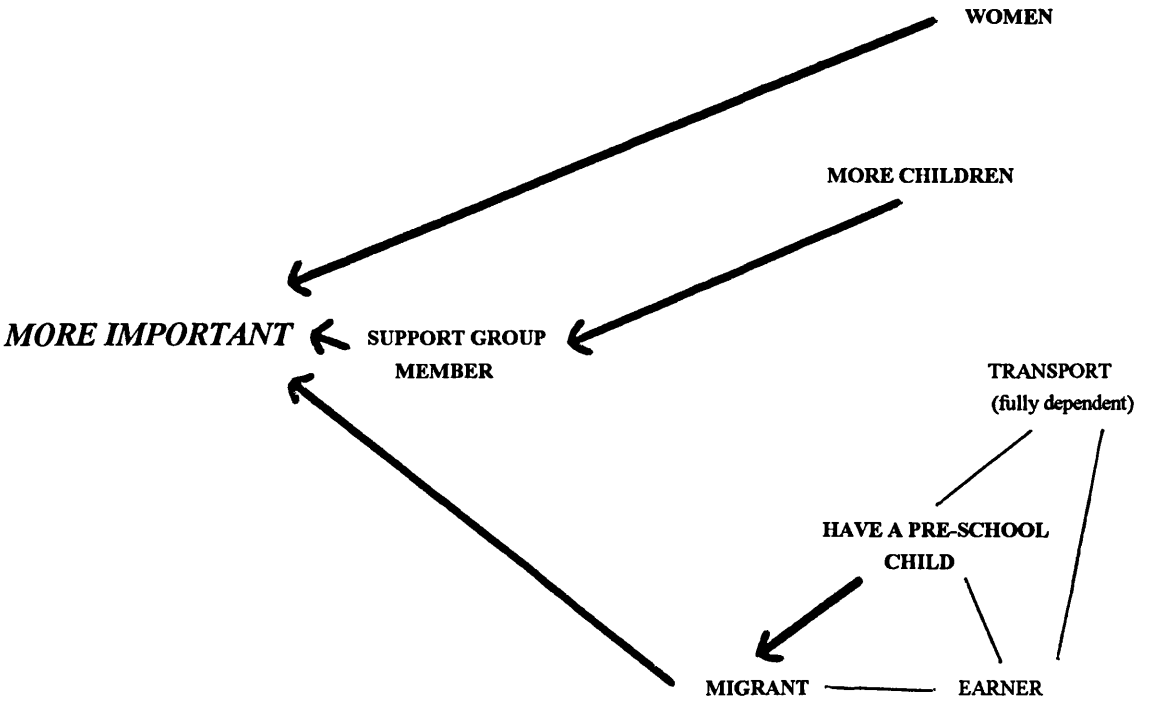
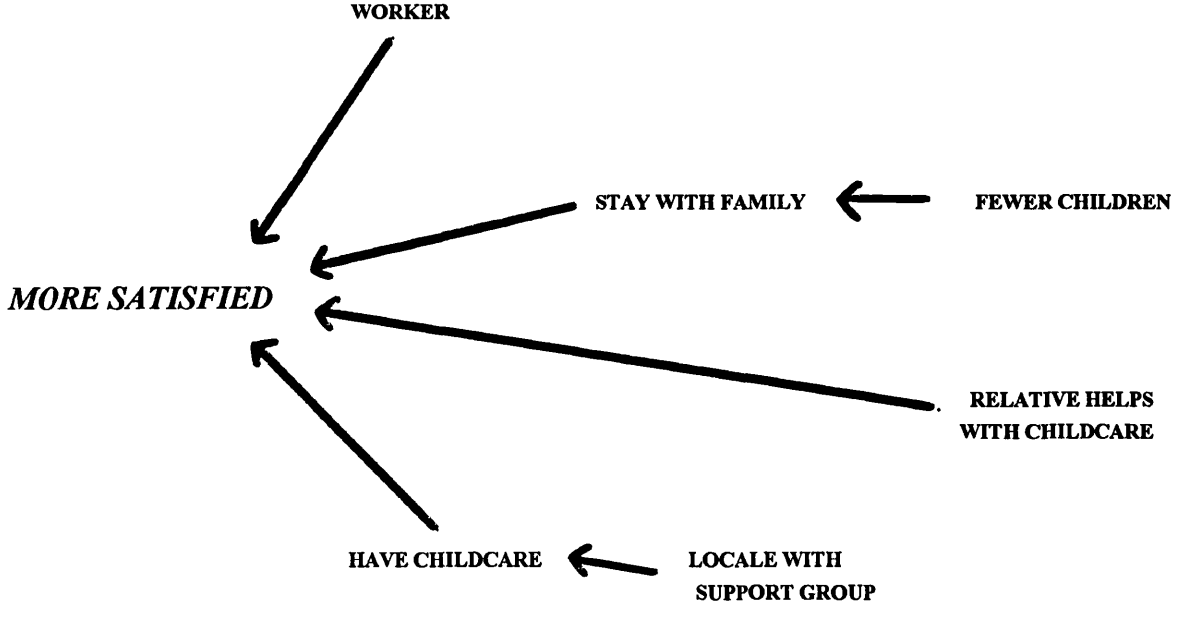


Figure 9.17
Satisfaction With Advice & Support : A Multi-Variate Analysis



9.3.8b Satisfaction With Advice & Support

As Figure 9.17 shows, work status and the number of childcare options are most closely associated with lone parents' satisfaction with advice & support. More generally, it is 'family' characteristics that help explain lone parents' satisfaction with advice & support, e.g. whether they stay with family or not, whether any relatives provide childcare support. Multi-variate analysis adds little to this understanding, although the size of the family is noted as a factor that influences whether the lone parent stayed with their family (smaller families more likely to live with other family) and attention drawn to the finding that lone parents will have more childcare options in areas where there is a lone parent support group.

9.3.9 FAMILY LIFE

Family life was identified as the life concern with which lone parents were most satisfied and as the aspect of life which most concerned them. Yet, as Figures 9.18 and 9.19 show, there are differences of opinion among sub-types of lone parent, particularly for the evaluative dimension of QoL. Not all components perform an explanatory function; this is most notable for domain importance where only one component fulfils an explanatory function. Given that family life has been shown to be a particularly significant life concern to lone parents, an appreciation of the differences among the lone parent population is a pertinent issue.

9.3.9a Importance of Family Life

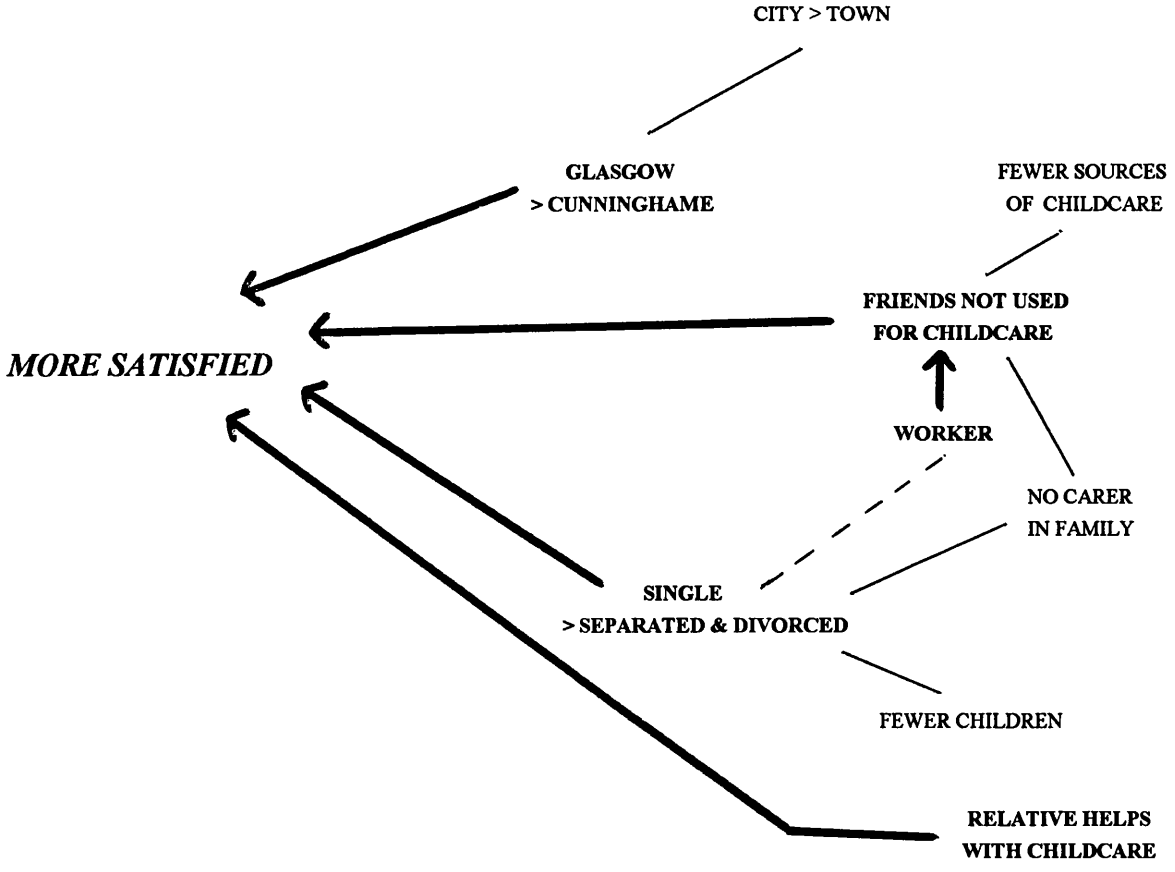
Socio-economic character accounts for differences in how importantly the family is regarded. The pivotal explanatory factor is education, which is the variable most closely associated with the QoL outcome as well as being an explanation for the other socio-economic components in the explanatory framework (Figure 9.18).

9.3.9b Satisfaction With Family Life

Despite the aggregate satisfaction of lone parents (Table 6.8), there are significant differences in the degree to which lone parents are satisfied with their family life. To a large extent, these differences can be accounted by the bivariate analysis; Figure 9.19 demonstrates that many explanatory factors exert an independent influence. However, the synthesis is useful in that it charts the relative significance of the various explanations. That is, geographical area of residence (lone parents from the city) and family status (single never married) lone parents are most satisfied. The former

Figure 9.18
Importance of Family : A Multi-Variate Analysis

Figure 9.19
Satisfaction With Family : A Multi-Variate Analysis



demonstrated that there is a geography of the family (to which geographers have not yet attended), while the latter provides an interesting contrast to what is widely regarded to be an unsuitable family arrangement (greater satisfaction of single lone parents). Both point to areas of considerable research potential for geographers. Nevertheless, great caution must be taken in interpreting these figures; the key finding is the overwhelming satisfaction lone parents draw from their family life.

9.3.10 CONTROL OVER LIFE

There is more disagreement among the lone parent population over the issue of how satisfied they are with the amount of control they have over their own lives, as opposed to how important they consider this domain to be (Figure 9.20 and 9.21). In each diagram, the majority of components perform an explanatory function; only work status and migration behaviour are non-explanatory components for domain satisfaction (Figure 9.21). Neither explanatory frameworks is complex, making the multivariate interpretation more straightforward.

9.3.10a Importance of Control over Life

Socio-economic factors are exclusively associated with how importantly lone parents value control over their lives (Figure 9.20). The nature of this is particularly significant, its components being associated with control, but in contradictory ways. Thus, it is known that owner-occupiers are more likely to receive maintenance (2.4.2), and it would be expected that private owners have more control over their life compared to public sector tenants. However, public sector tenants value control more than owner-occupiers, while maintenance recipients do not value control as highly as those who do not receive maintenance.

9.3.10b Satisfaction With Control over Life

The main contribution of the multivariate perspective for satisfaction with control is the specification of components that are significantly associated with the QoL outcome, but that do not contribute toward the explanation for it (work status, family structure, migration behaviour). Otherwise, the explanatory components largely act independently of one another. The exception would be the socio-economic character of the area in which lone parents reside (high status being associated with greater satisfaction). Here, it is found that this can partly be explained by the work status of the residents (workers in permanent employment being more likely to live in these areas). The other contribution of the multivariate framework of analysis is the relative importance of explanations; education clearly plays a central role in contributing toward lone parents' sense of control. More generally, economic status (work status, employee status) is less significant than previous marital status and is

Figure 9.20
Importance of Control Over Life : A Multi-Variate Analysis

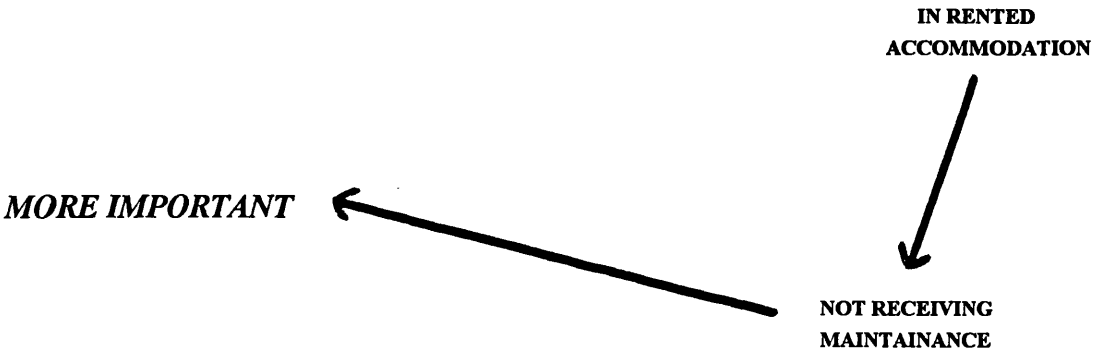
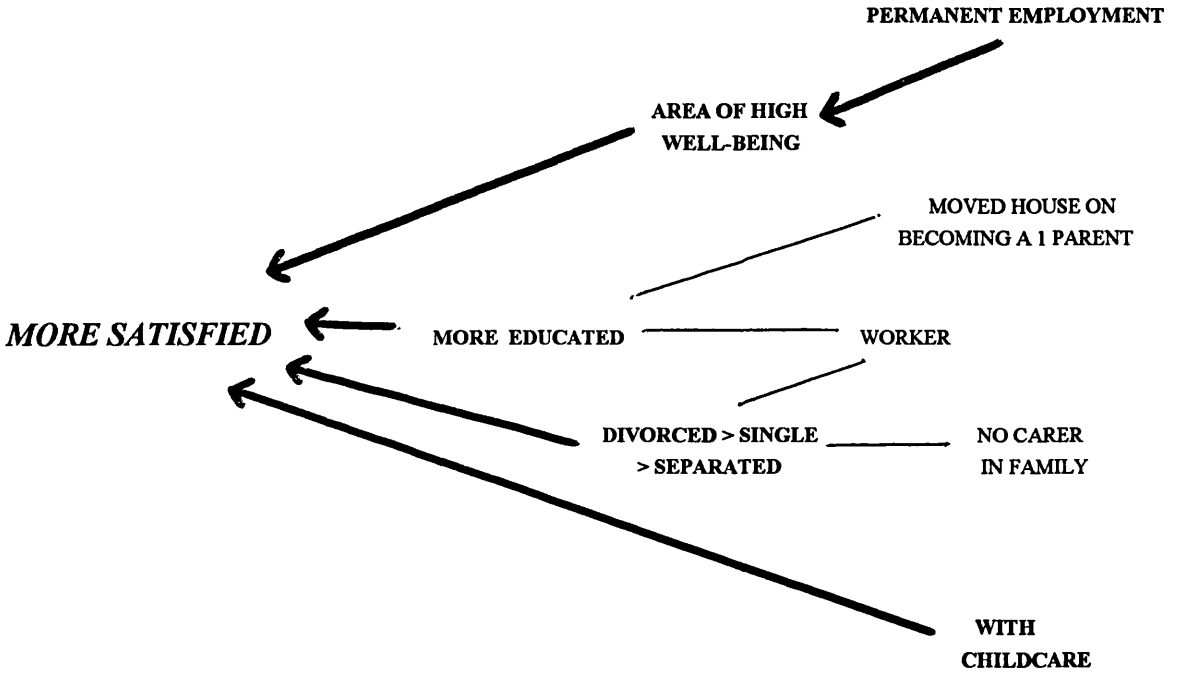


Figure 9.21
Satisfaction With Control Over Life : A Multi-Variate Analysis



only as significant as childcare experiences in explaining differences in expressed satisfaction. Economic-led initiatives to increase lone parents' sense of overall control (including self-esteem, security) are insufficient by themselves; a more wide-ranging strategy has to be employed.

9.3.11 TRANSPORT

There is more disagreement among the lone parent population over the issue of how important transportation is, as opposed to how satisfied they are with it (Figures 9.22 and 9.23). Most components fulfil an explanatory function in each.

9.3.11a Importance of Transport

As for satisfaction for control (Figure 9.21), the key contribution of the multivariate analysis of lone parents' concern with transport is in the specification of explanatory components and the relative significance of these; not, the links between explanatory factors. Education in particular is a key explanation as to why some lone parents are more concerned (Figure 9.22).

9.3.11b Satisfaction With Transport

Multi-variate analysis of why some lone parents are more satisfied with transport than others is among the least revealing of all such exercises. Initially, it is surprising to find that the extent to which lone parents can provide for their transportation needs is not associated with their level of satisfaction, (8.3.1d). However, the finding that previous marital status is the next most significant explanation is just as surprising. It would have been expected that other factors , e.g. work status and deprivation area, would have greater explanatory significance. Thus, while bivariate analysis of explanatory components and QoL outcome (transportation satisfaction) looked promising, the multi-variate analysis has only served to raise more questions than it is able to answer.

9.3.12 SERVICES

The explanatory frameworks for services are very similar (Figures 9.24 and 9.25); they have a low number of components (five in each), a fairly simple structure and a few components in each which do not fulfil an explanatory function. Thus, two components perform explanatory functions for importance (age, transport dependency & work status). The inter-relationships between these components warrants a multi-variate analysis of each explanatory framework.

Figure 9.22
Importance of Transport : A Multi-Variate Analysis

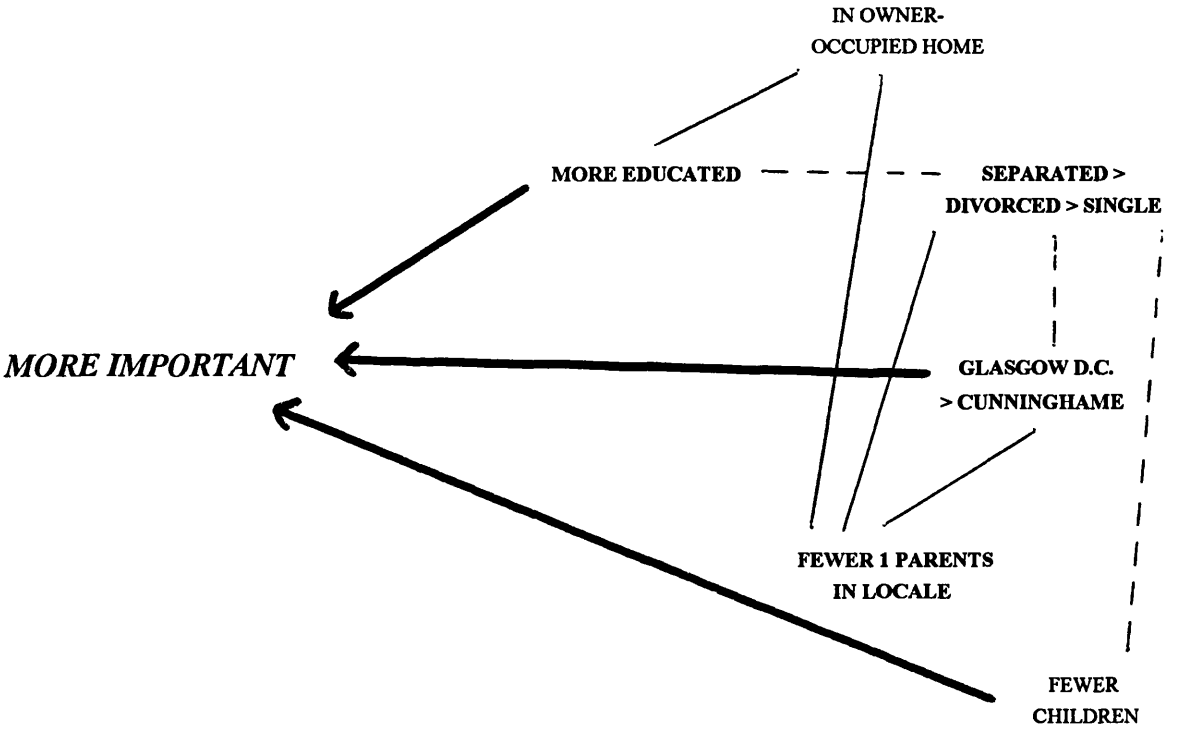


Figure 9.23
Satisfaction With Transport : A Multi-Variate Analysis

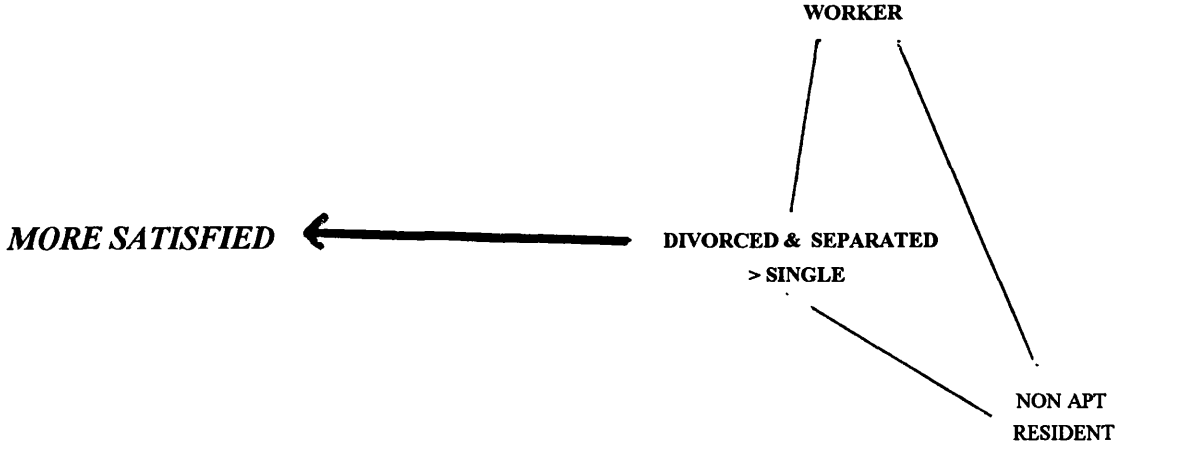


Figure 9.24
Importance of Services : A Multi-Variate Analysis

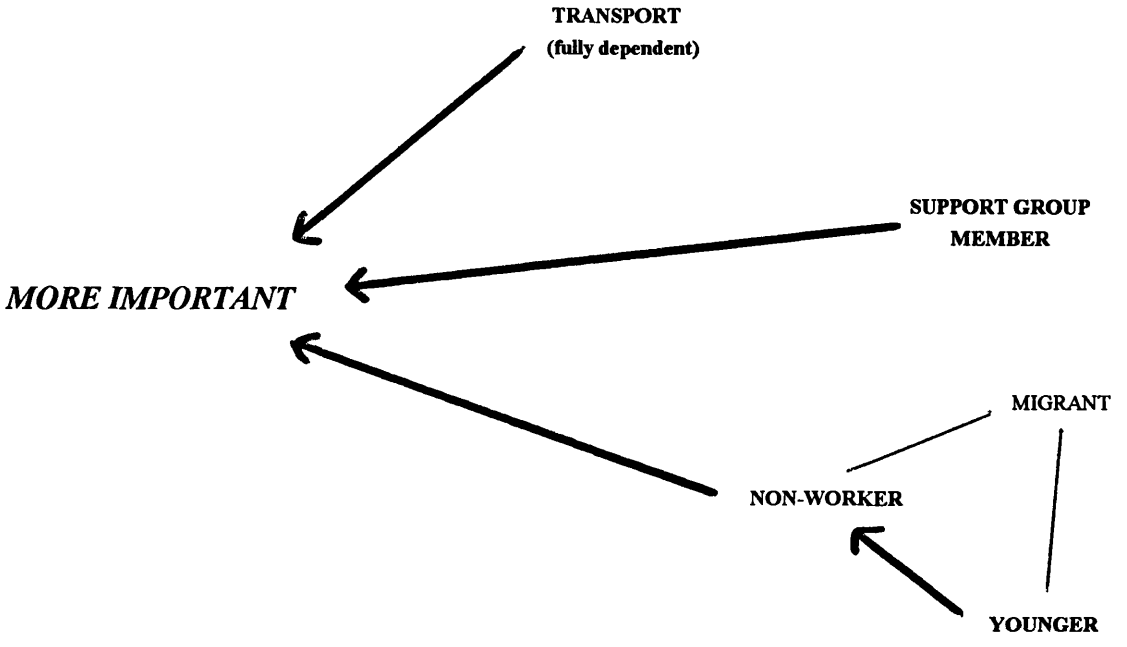
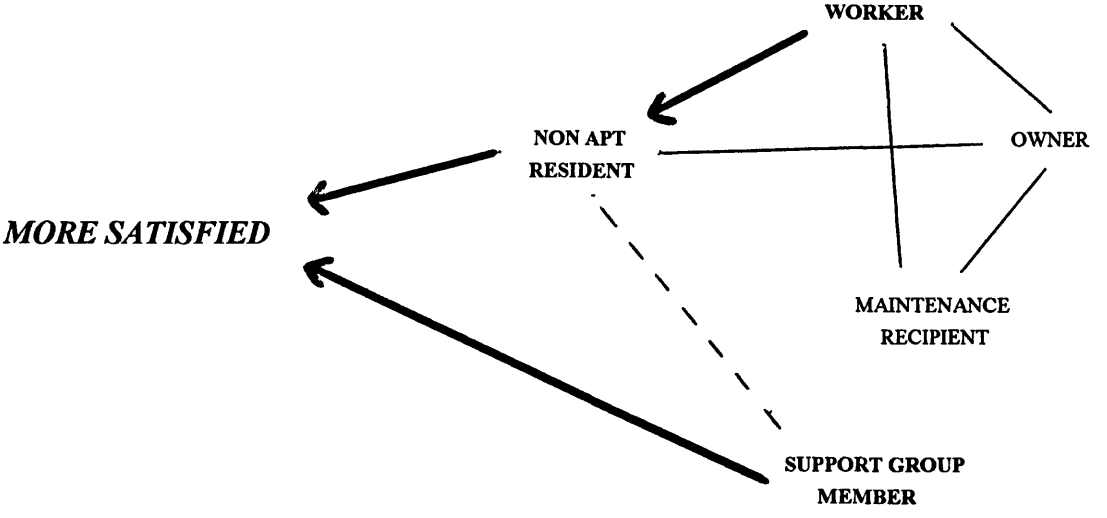


Figure 9.25
Satisfaction With Services : A Multi-Variate Analysis



9.3.12a Importance of Services

The socio-economically disadvantaged are more concerned with service provision (Figure 9.24). In particular, those who do not provide their own transport needs are more concerned. As Figure 9.24, the division of lone parents by transport character acts independently of (and is more significant as a cleavage among lone parents than) economic status. The reasons why lone parents who do not work as more concerned, is partly attributable to the fact that such lone parents tend to be younger (these lone parents are more concerned with service provision). Beyond this, members of lone parent support groups are also more concerned.

9.3.12b Satisfaction With Services

In general, lone parents who experience socio-economic advantage are most satisfied with services, i.e. workers, owners-occupiers, recipients of maintenance and those who don't reside in deprivation areas are most satisfied. However, the relative significance of the socio-economic explanations is particularly significant for geographers, i.e. the geographical component (areal deprivation status) is the socio-economic trait most closely associated with the QoL outcome. That is, lone parents who reside in areas of deprivation experience some dissatisfaction with services that are attributable to this geographical fact. This is not to imply that personal socio-economic character is unimportant; on the contrary, as Figure 9.25 demonstrates, whether or not the lone parent works, is of central significance in determining satisfaction and of course, increases the likelihood of some lone parents residing in deprivation areas (non workers).

9.3.13 NEIGHBOURHOOD

There are few differences of opinion among lone parents in terms of importance of and satisfaction with local residential environment; furthermore, these sources of difference interact in a simplistic manner within their general explanatory frameworks, with all components performing an explanatory function (Figures 9.26 and 9.27). Multi-variate analysis of neighbourhood opinions is more straightforward than with most other domains.

9.3.13a Importance of Neighbourhood

Lone parents with fewer sources of childcare tend to be more concerned with their neighbourhood (Figure 9.26). However, when multi-variate linkages are taken into account, it becomes apparent that this in turn reflects the absence of friends and relatives who perform a childcare function. Thus,

Figure 9.26
Importance of Neighbourhood : A Multi-Variate Analysis

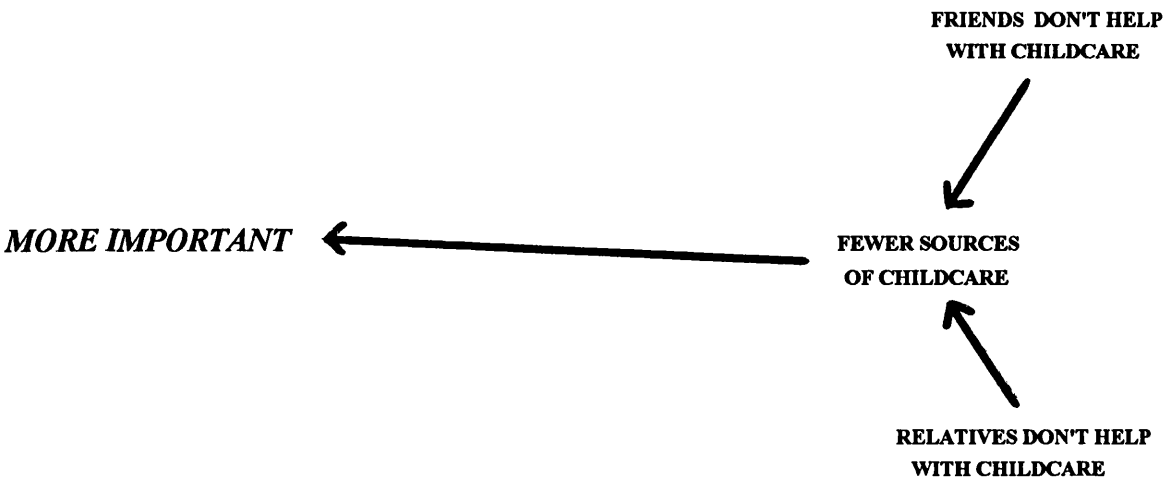


Figure 9.27
Satisfaction With Neighbourhood : A Multi-Variate Analysis

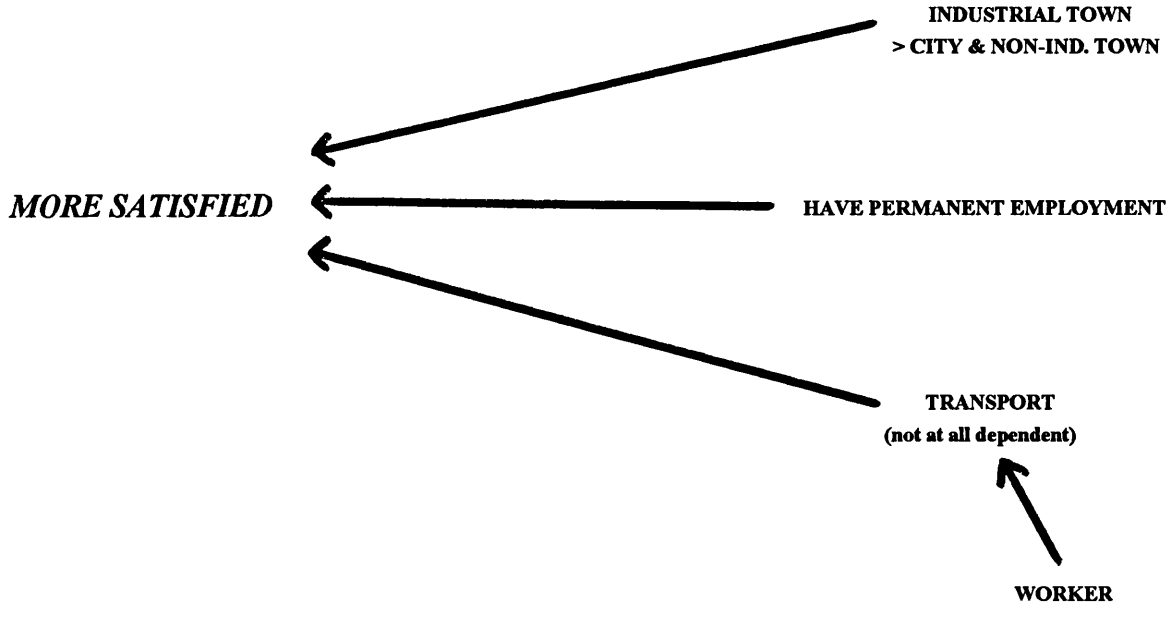


Figure 9.28
Importance of Leisure : A Multi-Variate Analysis

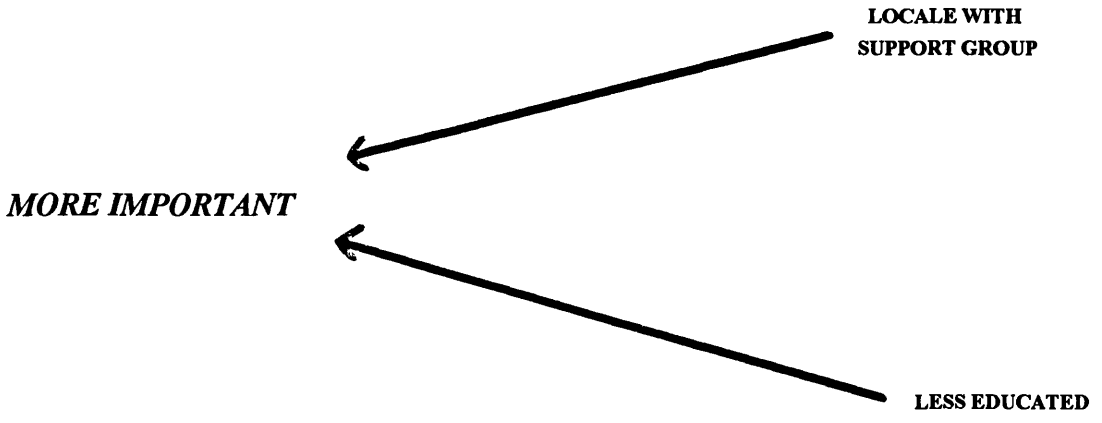
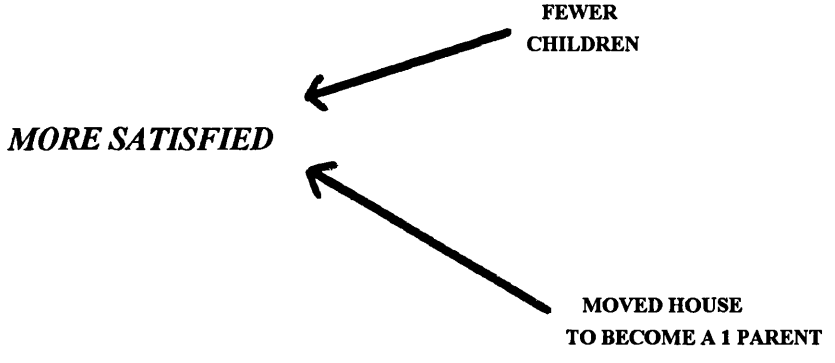


Figure 9.29
Satisfaction With Leisure : A Multi-Variate Analysis



childcare experience is an important factor in influencing lone parents' level of concern over their neighbourhood.

9.3.13b Satisfaction With Neighbourhood

Neighbourhood satisfaction can be accounted for by socio-economic status and macro-geographical environment. While the division between workers/non-workers features within the explanatory framework (and underlies the inclusion of transportation), it is significant that the division between workers (in terms of employment security) is a stronger explanatory factor, i.e. it would be inaccurate to reduce the level of understanding to economic resources alone.

9.3.14 LEISURE

There is no need for a multi-variate analysis of lone parents' opinions on leisure; there are no inter-relationships between explanatory components for importance or satisfaction (Figures 9.28 and 9.29). Indeed, the most striking feature is that differences of opinion among lone parents are minimal.

However, neither aspect of domain QoL can be explained by one type of explanation, nor is the combination of explanations comparable between them. Thus, those who did not move house after relationship breakdown (*lone parent* migration behaviour, i.e. 'lone parent' characteristic) and those with fewer children (demographic characteristic) are more satisfied; those residing in areas with a lone parent support group ('locational' characteristic) and those who continued with their education after school ('socio-economic' characteristic) are less concerned with leisure.

9.3.15 EXPLAINING QUALITY OF LIFE AT THE DOMAIN LEVEL : A SYNTHESIS

The primary aim of this section (9.3) has been to explain QoL opinion at domain level. While each of the (twenty-eight) substantive conclusions that have been reached are of importance in their own right, comparisons should be made to appraise their wider significance and to specify the general character of these explanatory frameworks. Thus, the general nature of these multi-variate explanations are compared. .

Table 9.1 summarises the key features of each domain level explanatory framework. Details are provided of the number of components (column b for domain importance and column f for domain satisfaction) , the complexity of the inter-relationships between these components (columns e and i) , the number of routes through which the

Table 9.1
Domain Level Explanations Of QoL : Key Features

	Number of Domains							
	Number Of Components/Routes/Non-Explanatory Components/Complex ?							
DOMAIN	**IMPORTANCE**				**SATISFACTION**			
A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**	**I**
Housing	10	3	8	Yes	5	3	4	-
Crime	11	3	6	Yes	3	1	3	-
Transport	3	1	1	-	6	3	4	-
Family	9	4	6	-	3	1	1	-
Control	8	4	6	-	3	2	3	-
Advice & Support	6	4	6	-	7	3	5	-
Opportunities	7	5	5	-	6	4	4	-
Others' Attitude	10	1	5	-	10	6	10	-
Work	9	3	7	Yes	6	4	5	-
Health	12	3	11	Yes	2	2	2	-
Services	5	2	3	-	5	3	4	-
Financial Situation	14	2	9	Yes	7	3	7	Yes
Neighbourhood	4	3	4	-	4	2	4	-
Leisure	2	2	2	-	2	2	2	-

Sources: Figures 9.2 to 9.29

QoL outcome is produced (columns c and g) and the number of components which do not influence the QoL outcome, but are part of the explanatory framework (columns d and h).

First, there tends to be more components in the 'evaluation' (domain satisfaction) explanatory frameworks than there are for 'definition' (domain importance). The work domain is a typical example having nine components for evaluation, but only six for definition (columns b and f, row d). On average, there are eight components for evaluation, but only five for definition. That is, there tends to be more divisions among the lone parent population regarding their experience of life concerns, compared to how importantly these life concerns are regarded. However, there are exceptions to this rule. There are *markedly* more explanatory components for evaluation, relative to definition, for health and crime (columns b and f, rows e and f, respectively). Indeed, these domains have the second-highest and third highest number of components for evaluation (12 and 11 respectively), but the lowest and third-lowest number of components for definition (2 and 3 respectively). Thus, there are many more types of lone parent who have divergent experiences of health and crime, despite considerable agreement among lone parents over how important they are. At the other extreme, there are twice as many components for definition, relative to evaluation, for transportation (columns b and f, row k). This is the only life concern where more lone parents disagree over its significance than over their experience of it.

What implications arise from the number of components in an explanatory framework? It could be argued that it can influence the likelihood of policy interventions being successful. That is, where many types of lone parent harbour differences of opinion, i.e. where there are a large number of components in an explanatory framework, the potential for mobilising the lone parent population around a particular issue will be lower and the difficulty of targeting the population in need will be greater. However, differences of opinion may only be a matter of degree, not of general outlook. Thus, a high number of components (cleavages among lone parents) is a reliable indicator to use to this end. Similarly, if divergent opinion is contained within smaller groups, then this may not preclude action for/by larger factions of lone parents. Furthermore, there are other factors to consider when estimating the potential for policy interventions, e.g. the role of the policy-maker, political climate etc. Nevertheless, the extent of variation is a useful indicator of themes around which it may be more difficult to make effective policy interventions. Table 9.1 suggests that this warning applies, in particular, to financial situation, health, crime, housing and others' attitude (each of which harbours many differences among lone parents in terms of satisfaction evaluations, column b).

The complexity of the explanatory framework is a second general feature that should be discussed. Only six explanatory frameworks are complex (columns c and g of Table 9.1), i.e. evaluations of housing, crime, work & health and both definition & evaluation for financial matters. In general, these complex explanatory frameworks are the ones with the most components, e.g. financial matters has the most components for evaluation (row a, column b of Table 9.1) and the second-highest amount of components for definition (row a, column f of Table 9.1). However, this association between number and complexity of components is not exclusive, e.g. while the complex explanatory framework for the importance of financial matters consists of seven components (Figure 9.2, in 9.3.1), several other simpler frameworks have more components, i.e. others' attitude (definition & evaluation), opportunities (evaluation), control (evaluation) and family life (evaluation).

It is easier to estimate the impact of a policy intervention when the explanations for the QoL outcome are straightforward. For example, satisfaction with advice & support (Figure 9.17, in 9.3.8) is explained by work status, form of childcare, number of childcare options and tenancy status. Only the latter two are influenced by secondary factors, i.e. those with fewer children are more likely to live with their family and those who reside in areas without a lone parent support group are more likely to have access to childcare. Thus, possible policy interventions to increase lone parents satisfaction with advice & support are easily identifiable and their channel of application is very straightforward. A comparison with domain importance for advice & support, which has a similar number of components (Figure 9.16) demonstrates that simplicity is not universal. However, does complexity imply ineffectual policy intervention? It is possible that where the QoL outcome is the result of complex inter-relationships among explanatory components, any policy intervention geared toward an empirical group would have a positive knock-on effect on the QoL outcome for other groups. For example, take the influence of age on lone parent satisfaction with crime (Figure 9.13). Tracing the associations with other variables, it can be seen that;

1) Younger lone parents are less likely to work (in turn, non-workers are less satisfied with their safety against crime).
2) Younger lone parents are less likely to have lived with their ex-partner prior to lone parenthood (in turn, single lone parents are less likely to work and, in turn, non-workers are less satisfied with their safety against crime).

thus, policy interventions aimed to improve this perception (or reality) of young lone parents safety against crime, would inadvertently improve safety for non-workers and those who haven't previously lived with partners. Two more general conclusions can also be illustrated with reference to this example. First, it is important to consider secondary influences when policy interventions are being devised. Thus, to improve lone parent safety against crime, targeting younger, non-married, non-working lone parents would yield the greatest improvements. Second, complex explanatory frameworks can, and should be, reduced to the core explanatory components to clarify where the key interventions should take place. This advice was heeded throughout 9.3. Thus, complexity does not preclude intervention; rather, as has been the strategy throughout this chapter, the complexity must be dealt with before policy debate commences.

Following from this, a third characteristic worthy of note is the number of explanatory components (columns d and h of Table 9.1). Once again, there is a marked difference between domain importance and domain satisfaction. In general, there are more components which do not perform an explanatory function for domain satisfaction (on average, three of the eight components), whereas, for domain importance only one component, on average, does not fulfil an explanatory function.

Three domain satisfaction frameworks have five components which perform no explanatory function, i.e. financial (Figure 9.3), crime (Figure 9.13) and others' attitude (Figure 9.5). For the latter, this represented a 50% reduction in the number of components (from basic framework to core explanatory framework). However, in contrast, eleven of the twelve components for health satisfaction (Figure 9.11) perform an explanatory function, as do each of the ten components for the importance of others' attitude (Figure 9.4) and each of the seven components for the importance of financial situation (Figure 9.2). In general, the interpretation of domain satisfaction is made much simpler when the frameworks are reduced to their explanatory components.

However, each of the characteristics discussed thus far, deals indirectly with the potential for policy interventions. The fourth, and final, general characteristic of the domain level explanatory frameworks which is now discussed, addresses this issue directly. That is, columns c and g of Table 9.1 report the number of independent pathways through which the QoL outcome is produced. In general there are limited channels through which the QoL outcome may be 'improved' for both satisfaction and importance. Perhaps surprisingly, there is no relationship between the number of channels and the number of components. For example, the explanatory framework for financial satisfaction has fourteen components but only one channel (Figure 9.3 and compare columns b & f and c & g of Table 9.1). Indeed, if anything, the more complex explanatory frameworks tend to have fewer channels (compare columns d & f and e & g of Table 9.1). Thus, it is not necessarily the

case that explanatory frameworks with a high number of components present the least opportunity for successful policy intervention.

These then are the general characteristics of the explanatory frameworks for domain level QoL. It has been shown how it is difficult to generalise the likely success of policy interventions from these summations. However, teasing out the policy relevance of the thesis is of the utmost importance; the concluding chapter of the thesis (chpt. 11) will remark upon the main contributions of this research toward policy debates.

9.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, explanations for QoL at the domain and aggregate levels of analysis have been offered. Initially, QoL at the aggregate level was considered. Before, discussing explanations for this, it was necessary to consider whether there were any discrepancies between the explanations for the two models of QoL used in the thesis (9.2.1). It was established that in terms of their general explanatory structure (9.2.1a) and their component composition (9.2.1b), both models produced similar, although not identical explanations for lone parent QoL. This being so, a single (composite) explanation was discussed in 9.2.2. Four reasons were suggested for the differences in the QoL experienced by lone parents, i.e. economic status, the geographical (lone parent) character of the place of residence, previous marital status and childcare experiences. While these cover each macro-explanatory category (socio-economic status, geographical character, demography and lone parent-related, respectively), the economic cleavage was without question the most important division among lone parents, i.e. working lone parents experienced a higher QoL.

However, the aggregate level explanations did not account for the differences among lone parents at the domain level. Indeed, each of the twenty-eight explanations for domain QoL (Figures 9.2 to 9.29) differ to that of the aggregate level. This is an important finding, i.e. the aggregate level analysis is prone to overlook some critical cleavages among lone parents and, by the same token, is prone to overestimate the importance of others. To reach a conclusion on which explanations fall into which category (and which are adequately represented by the aggregate level analysis), it is necessary to summarise the most important explanations at domain level. This can be attempted at three scales of analysis, i.e. macro-level (comparing the four main types of explanation), meso-level (based on the general character of each pathway toward QoL) and micro-level (based on the prevalence of each specific explanatory component).

First, at the macro-level (general character of each pathway), for domain importance, socio-economic explanations are the most prevalent. Lone parent related explanations are also quite common; geographic and demographic based explanations are of more limited significance. In this way, the domain level results are comparable to that for the aggregate level. However, for domain satisfaction it is found that lone parent related explanations are as important as socio-economic ones. Furthermore, geographical explanations are relatively more significant for this aspect of domain QoL, although demographic-based explanations remain less important. The differences between for domain satisfaction and overall QoL are more important that the similarities between importance and overall QoL, given that the former are both evaluative components of QoL.

At the meso-level (specific character of each pathway), it remains the case that socio-economic explanations are the most prevalent for domain importance. However, it becomes clear that education status (and not economic status) is the key cleavage. Thus, another difference with the overall QoL level of analysis is identified. Furthermore, for domain satisfaction, socio-economic

explanations are not as significant as they were for domain importance. However, here work status remains the key cleavage among lone parents; deprivation status of area of residence, tenure status and childcare experiences are also important.

However, the summary character of each pathway disguises their overall composition, i.e. a particular explanation may contribute across a wide range of domains, without being the key character in any. Thus, a micro-level analysis (components which explain QoL at domain level) is a useful contribution to knowledge. For domain importance, no single cleavage is an important division for more than one-third of the domains. Nevertheless, education status, transport, previous marital status, work status and family structure are all important divisions among lone parents in terms of their outlook on QoL. Work status is the outstanding cleavage among the lone parent population for domain satisfaction; it contributes to the explanation for lone parent QoL in twelve of the fourteen domains. However, other cleavages are also important. In particular, education status, previous marital status, childcare experiences, family structure and age are important divisions among lone parents.

How do these domain level results compare to those of the aggregate level? The aggregate level analysis captures the key division among lone parents (work status) and draws attention to other important cleavages (previous marital status and childcare experiences). However, the geographical (lone parent) character of the area of residence is not an important cleavage across a wide range of domains. On the other hand, the significance of family structure tends to be overlooked.

Even so, these insights are of subsidiary importance; the key point of this chapter is that economic status is the key division among lone parents, but that the differences among lone parents are ultimately domain and QoL component specific in nature.

CHAPTER TEN

LONE PARENTS' QUALITY OF LIFE AND THEIR LIFE COURSE

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Previous chapters have described (6.4), defended the concept of (chpt. 7) and accounted for the level and nature of lone parent quality of life (chpt. 8 & 9). This research effort has focused on lone parents' QoL as (then) currently experienced. Here, the analysis is extended to examine changes in the QoL of present-day lone parents through time. Placing the understanding of QoL within the broader context of life changes, experienced and expected, is the focus of this chapter.

Ideally, temporal research should adopt a longitudinal framework (Adams & Schvandevaldt 85). Indeed, there are examples of QoL research programmes that have adopted such an approach, e.g.. Chamberlain & Zika 92. In longitudinal research, QoL (or any other phenomena being considered) is measured on several occasions over a period of time; measurements can be related to changes in personal circumstances, to reach an understanding changes in QoL through time. An alternative approach, is to measure changes in QoL through time for successive panels of a population group, e.g. Mastekassa & Kaasa 89. Here, different individuals may be involved at different times and the results are analysed for the population group as a whole. Each approach has its strengths and weaknesses (Adams & Schvandevaldt 85), but each is preferable to that which is adopted within the thesis, i.e. temporal appraisals within a cross-sectional survey.

As is described in 10.2.1a, each lone parent was asked to evaluate their QoL, relative to the average person, at three times in their life, i.e. current time, five years go and five years hence. Historical appraisal by recall within a cross-sectional survey is an appropriate method to use given the limitations imposed by a doctoral research project that is not fieldwork-based nor part of an on-going project. The quality of the information generated by this survey instrument is discussed in 10.2.1b; the empirical results are analysed in 10.3.

However, this temporal analysis is not restricted to descriptions and explanations of changes in QoL through time. Additionally, QoL is examined within the context of one particular change in a lone parent's life, i.e. migration. This provides the opportunity to examine whether emerging theory on migration and QoL (Findlay & Rogerson 91, 93) is of general applicability, or, in contrast, is subject specific. The question is posed thus: How does the lone parent experience of migration compare to established theory on the relationship between migration and QoL? This issue is addressed in 10.4.2

More generally, it is important that a socio-population study of lone parents addresses migration, since the process of lone parenthood is inextricably linked to household (re)formation. Indeed, population geographers such as Grundy (92) and Champion (92) have identified the broader area of household change and migration as a key area for further research. Are some types of lone parent more likely to migrate? Does experience of migration as a lone parent differ from experience of migration which preceded lone parenthood? These are among the migration-related issues that are considered in 10.4.1 and 10.4.3.

10.2 DATA SOURCES AND QUALITY

In chapter four, the composition of the Lone Parent Quality Of Life (hereafter LPQoL) questionnaire and the quality of the information received, were discussed (4.4.1). However, there was insufficient space to fully examine the tools of temporal analysis in adequate depth. This is now addressed prior to the discussion of the research findings.

10.2.1 QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH TIME

10.2.1a Sources

Each lone parent was asked to evaluate his/her overall life quality, relative to the average person, during three periods of their life, i.e. current time, five years ago and five years on (Appendix 4). Responses were recorded on a 21-point scale ranging from -10 (labelled as 'way below average') through 0 ('average') to +10 ('way above average'). This device is a modification of Cantrill's Ladder (Cantrill 65), in which respondents were asked where they stood on an 11-point scale ranging from the 'worst possible life for you' through to the 'best possible life for you'. It was necessary to adapt Cantrill's scheme for four reasons:

1. *Wording.* The wording used in the Cantrill ladder could be open to misinterpretation, i.e. the 'for you' endings could be read as 'for a lone parent'. Due to the fact that the expectations of life quality for a lone parent are likely to be lower than that for people in general, the survey responses could be misleading and over-rate their QoL, relative to the average person, i.e. respondents would be more likely to attain the best possible life for a lone parent, than they would be to achieve the best possible life for the general population. To ensure that the responses are a meaningful measure of their perception of their standing in society, direct evaluations with 'the average person' were made.
2. *Measurement Range.* The 21-point scale that was used, as opposed to Cantrill's 11-point scale, permitted a greater range of expression, allowing small-scale changes in life quality to be registered across the three time periods.
3. *Orientation.* In this survey the 'ladder' was presented horizontally due to space constraints.
4. *Temporal Dimensions.* Pilot survey experience suggested that it was not necessary to canvass opinion for six stages of life, as in the Cantrill model; measurement was restricted to the three periods which met the particular requirements of the thesis.

Comparison of past/current evaluations and future/current evaluations measures the changes in life quality that have been experienced and that are expected, respectively.

10.2.1b Quality of Information

Lone parent's *perception* of their own QoL was measured; this does not necessarily equate with reality, nor with other peoples' perception of lone parent QoL. The value of self-perception in a QoL study has already been discussed (4.1.1 & 4.1.2b). Of course, the utility of this information depends on the quality of the responses. Two factors can be cited in support of the quality of the information that was received:

1) *Preventative Action.* As was described in 10.2.1a, the original Cantrill model was adapted to meet the requirements of a lone parent survey. Such precautionary measures reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation on the part of survey respondents.
2) *Response Rate.* A response rate of 97% was achieved; with every respondent answering all three parts of the question. This suggests respondents faced little difficulties with this section of the questionnaire and that the results will be representative of the survey population (which, it has been demonstrated (Table 4.7), is representative of the lone parent population at large).

With no evidence to the contrary, it can be concluded that the section on temporal changes in overall QoL provided data of an acceptable standard.

10.2.2 MIGRATION DATA

10.2.2a Sources

Respondents were asked five questions regarding previous migration behaviour (Appendix 4)

1) They were asked if they ever lived together with their ex-partner (non-widowed only).
2) Those who had lived with their ex-partner, were asked if they moved house when the relationship ended.
3) Those who had lived with their ex-partner were also asked for how long they had lived together before the relationship ended.
4) All respondents were asked if they had moved house within the last twenty years.
5) Those who had migrated within the last twenty years were invited to complete a table recording details of their four most recent migrations. Data was collected on the date of the move, where they moved from, who they had shared with and why they had moved.

Each of these questions was constructed specifically for the purposes of the thesis.

10.2.2b Quality of Information

Two issues are discussed, i.e. the response rate and secondly, the quality of migration data.

RESPONSE RATES: Three-quarters of the survey respondents (201 lone parents) provided details of their household migrations. Of these, 18% provided information for four moves, 22% for three moves, 26% for two moves and 34% for one move. This provided 201 cases of the most recent migration; 134 of the second previous; 81 of the third previous and 36 examples of the fourth previous migration.

QUALITY OF INFORMATION: Four points should be made regarding the quality of the migration data used in this chapter:

1) *Incomplete Migration Histories:* Where respondents are asked to describe a specific number of migrations, there is the possibility that some will be unable to report a complete migration history; however, for practical considerations, it is beneficial to set such a limit. It was considered that four migrations would provide sufficient data for the research questions that were posed. However, it was considered that four migrations provided sufficient data for the research questions that were to be addressed.
2) *Non-Responses*. One-sixth of the survey population provided an incomplete record of their migration history (15 survey respondents [5%] offered no information and 33 [12%] did not provide details of their movements despite noting that they had moved within the last twenty years. This raises the possibility that the migration data is not drawn from a representative proportion of the survey population. To assess this contention, the profile of non-respondents was compared with respondents, as was that of non-responding migrants with responding migrants (col. c with e and col. g with i of Table 10.1 respectively).

   The migrants who did not provide details of their migration history do not differ from those who completed the migration table within the questionnaire (col. g & i of Table 10.1). The similarities between these groups of migrants are evident in terms of socio-economic character (parts e to i), demographic status (a to d), residential location (j) and lone parent specific population traits (k to m). Clearly, the migration data from the table is drawn from a sample that is representative of all lone parent migrants who responded to the survey questionnaire. However, an additional source of bias may be from those questionnaire respondents who provided themselves as migrants whatsoever, i.e. those who identified themselves as migrants may not be representative of the Lone Parent Quality of Life (hereafter LPQoL) questionnaire respondents.

   Columns c to e of Table 10.1 compares the profile of respondents and non-respondents to the migration section of the questionnaire of the LPQoL questionnaire. It is found that for every characteristic for which the two groups have a similar profile, there is another for which significant differences are discernible; this is the case for socio-economic, demographic and lone parent specific characteristics. in general, it appears that slightly more of the socio-economically disadvantaged (rows e to g for col. c to e of Table 10.1), women (row b), support group members (row m) and lone parents of longer duration (row l) did not provide migration details (and are therefore under-represented in the migration results). However, these conclusions are drawn from such a small number of non-respondents (15) and, as was mentioned, there is just as much evidence of similarity between respondents and non-respondents. Thus, the migration data

Table 10.1
Estimation of Migration Data Bias : Profile Of Respondents

PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT SURVEY POPULATION - by column (Cases)

VARIABLE	Variate	DID LONE PARENT ANSWER SURVEY QUESTION: MIGRATE 20 YEARS No		MIGRATE 20 YEARS Yes		MIGRATION HISTORY No		MIGRATION HISTORY Yes	
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
a) AGE :	under 24	21	(3)	16	(41)	23	(6)	16	(29)
	25-29	21	(3)	27	(70)	12	(3)	33	(59)
	30-34	29	(4)	23	(59)	35	(9)	24	(43)
	35-39	21	(3)	21	(55)	12	(3)	14	(24)
	over 40	7	(1)	13	(34)	19	(5)	6	(11)
b) SEX :	male	0	(0)	8	(21)	8	(2)	7	(14)
	female	100	(15)	92	(234)	92	(23)	93	(184)
c) CHILD :	Pre-school	47	(7)	49	(127)	46	(12)	49	(98)
	Not	53	(8)	51	(123)	54	(14)	52	(104)
d) NUMBER OF CHILDREN :	1	21	(3)	42	(118)	35	(9)	48	(96)
	2	50	(7)	32	(82)	46	(12)	31	(62)
	3	14	(2)	17	(43)	15	(4)	15	(29)
	4+	14	(2)	6	(16)	4	(1)	7	(13)
e) WORKING :	Yes	17	(2)	48	(104)	50	(12)	49	(81)
	No	83	(10)	52	(114)	50	(12)	52	(86)
f) AGE LEAVE SCHOOL :	Early	46	(6)	28	(68)	31	(8)	29	(55)
	Medium	46	(6)	46	(110)	42	(11)	45	(86)
	Late	8	(1)	26	(63)	27	(7)	26	(49)
g) EDUCATION AFTER SCHOOL :	0yr	92	(11)	66	(146)	70	(16)	63	(110)
	1yr	8	(1)	13	(29)	13	(3)	14	(24)
	2+yr	0	(-)	21	(46)	17	(4)	24	(42)
h) EDUCATION ATTAINMENT :	High	7	(1)	20	(47)	15	(4)	22	(42)
	Low	93	(13)	80	(192)	85	(22)	78	(146)
i) TENURE :	Owner	13	(2)	16	(37)	17	(4)	16	(20)
	Renter	87	(13)	84	(200)	83	(20)	84	(152)
j) APT RESIDENT :	Yes	54	(7)	31	(68)	33	(6)	30	(12)
	No	46	(6)	69	(149)	67	(12)	70	(120)
k) STATUS :	Divorced	36	(5)	38	(93)	38	(9)	39	(75)
	Separated	29	(4)	29	(70)	38	(9)	28	(54)
	Single	36	(5)	33	(79)	25	(6)	33	(63)
l) TIME AS A LONE PARENT :	short	33	(5)	51	(132)	50	(13)	50	(100)
	long	67	(10)	49	(128)	50	(13)	51	(102)
m) SUPPORT GROUP MEMBER	Yes	79	(11)	34	(89)	73	(19)	64	(129)
	No	21	(3)	66	(169)	27	(7)	36	(72)

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)
Key : A - Profile Characteristic
B - Variate of A)
C/D - No migration details provided
E/F - Details of migration history provided
G/H - Migrants, no details of migration movements
I/J - Migrants with details of migration movements
K/L - Non-Conforming Responses

should not be dismissed on the basis of this evidence. Rather, subsequent interpretation of the migration data will pay close attention to possible instances where such under-representation may influence the results.

3) *Migration Distances*. The specificity of household location varied between respondents and within respondents' migration histories. This creates a potential inaccuracy in the calculation of when migration distances, e.g. distance measurements between two postcodes will be more accurate than that between two regions. Therefore, rules were followed to minimise and standardise the error, e.g. distances were calculated from the mid-point of each spatial unit.

In conclusion, several potential weaknesses of the migration data were identified. Steps were taken to overcome these problems. Generally, the sample is representative of the survey population and is of an acceptable degree of accuracy.

10.2.3 TEMPORAL DATA

10.2.3a Sources

Time series data from the questionnaire originates from three sources:

1) *Direct Questions*. Of which there are three, i.e. the migration table (10.2.2), the quality of life evaluations (10.2.1) and a question asking respondents about their attitudes towards future partners (Appendix 4). This fixed-response question allowed lone parents to be categorised according to their 'preferred marital status in five years time'.
2) *Present-Day Time Series Questions*. The questions on respondent's age, the age of their children and the length of time they had been a lone parent (Appendix 4) can be post-dated and extrapolated.
3) *Applications*. Other data can be manipulated. From the migration table, previous residential location can be specified for a particular time (as far back as the year for which details are provided). More importantly, the date of each household migration can be compared against the date from which lone parenthood commenced (post-dating the length of time as a lone parent from the present) to categorise each migration in terms of lone parent status. Thus, each migration can be classified into one of the following three categories:

   i) Before lone parenthood (start of lone parenthood was after the migration)
   ii) Into lone parenthood (start of lone parenthood coincides with the migration)
   iii) During lone parenthood (start of lone parenthood was before the migration).

   Another important extrapolation is that of previous marital status. This is inferred by comparing the duration of lone parenthood with the length of time the respondent lived with their partner before relationship breakdown. Taking five years ago as an example, the three possible outcomes are:

i) Lone Parent (if the duration of lone parenthood is five years or more, then the respondent would have been a lone parent five years ago)

ii) Single (if the duration of lone parenthood and the length of time the respondent stayed with their previous partner are less than five years in total, then the respondent was single five years ago).

iii) Partnered (otherwise, the respondent was a partnered parent or a partner without children five years ago).

10.2.3b Quality of Information

Two points should be noted regarding the quality of manipulated time series data:

1) *Family Type.* Ages of children within the lone parent family were coded either pre-school (0-4 years), primary school (5-11 years), secondary school (12-17 years) or beyond school age (18+). To classify family structure five years before present, it was assumed that each child would belong to their previous school category. This procedure is satisfactory for the majority of children, but for children at the upper-end of each age group this is an incorrect assumption. Thus, a seventeen year old who was categorised as 'secondary school age' in the survey would be incorrectly categorised as of 'primary school age'.
2) *Location Profiles of Previous Residences.* Profile information on residential locations outside Strathclyde were not available. Therefore, the changing nature of residential location for those lone parents whose previous residence(s) were outside Strathclyde are incomplete.

These particular limitations are taken into account in the analysis of previous QoL in 10.3.2c. Otherwise, the manipulated temporal data presents no problems in interpretation.

As for contemporary QoL in the previous chapters, the quality of the temporal data has been subjected to critical review prior to empirical analysis. Some cautions have been raised, e.g. there is a possibility of *minor* bias against the socio-economically disadvantaged in the migration results (10.2.2b) and some limitations have been conceded, e.g. as only details of up to four previous migrations were asked for, some lone parents will only be able to provide an incomplete migration history. The analysis that follows will account for such factors. However, the only general conclusion that can be reached on the evidence discussed in 10.2, is that the time series QoL, migration and time series life changes data are of an acceptable degree of accuracy and are representative of the lone parent population.

10.3 TEMPORAL CHANGES IN OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE

10.3.1 DESCRIBING LONE PARENTS' QUALITY OF LIFE : PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

As was reported in 6.4.3a, lone parents believe that they are worse off now than they were before, but that their lot will improve in the future to a level that is better than it was in the past (Figure 10.1). Lone parents self-evaluation of their current QoL is consistent with their material circumstances, i.e. the lower-than-average evaluations mirror the findings of national survey data that report higher deprivation ratings for lone parents (6.2.1 & 6.5.1). However, the (relatively) higher self-evaluations of QoL of previous times needs to be accounted. One plausible explanation is that many of the respondents were not lone parents at this time (and therefore experienced a higher QoL . This hypothesis is one of several that are now considered.

It is useful to complement this *aggregate* level analysis with a description of *individual* trends. The task is to assess the extent to which individual experiences match the general lone parent trend.

Comparing QoL in 1986 with the changes experienced since (Table 10.2a), highlights an inverse relationship, i.e. the higher the QoL in 1986, the more likely it is that QoL has decreased since this time. Nevertheless, there are significant variations from this general trend, e.g. the QoL of almost one-sixth of those lone parents who experienced a below average life quality in 1986, actually decreased from 1986-91; similarly, one-fifth of those lone parents with above average life quality in 1986 experienced increases in QoL over the next five years. Thus, for most lone parents, the recent past has been a period of change in their QoL, regardless of what it was before. Furthermore, the dominant trend is one of redressing imbalance, i.e. those who had (in 1986) a 'high' QoL, have since experienced a worsening in QoL and those who had a 'low' QoL, have since experienced an improvement. It is possible that these changes are associated with the transition to lone parenthood, which for the former would be a negative change and for the latter, a positive one; this hypothesis will be examined in the next sub-section (10.3.2).

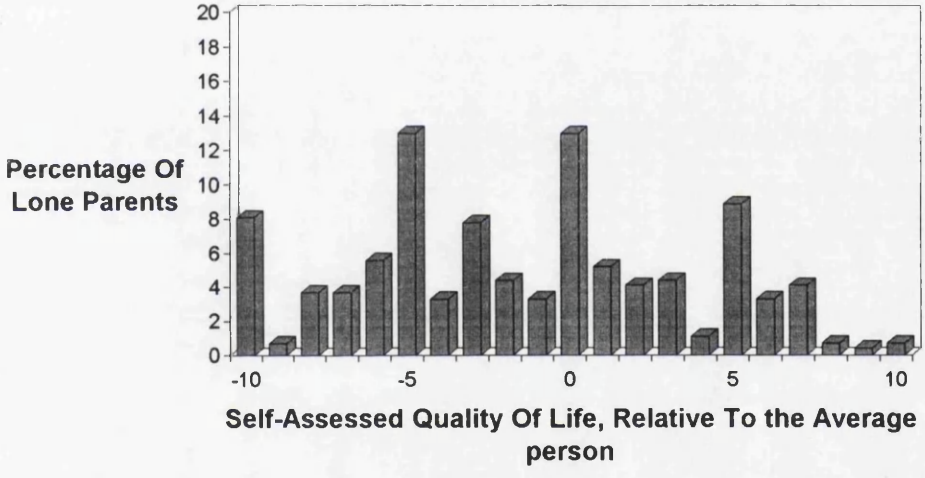
Such trends (and possible explanations for them) do not apply for anticipated changes from the present day (Table 10.2b). The key finding is that stability in QoL is more prevalent; particularly so, for those who currently experience an above average QoL (70% of whom expect to maintain their current status five years hence). Of the five trends anticipated, those with an average QoL are also most likely to predict stability (40%). In contrast, those with a below average QoL are clearly optimistic about their QoL prospects; a majority anticipate improvements (although one quarter also forecast more of the same). indeed, these results add important insights to the aggregate level trend, i.e. the (aggregate level) observation that, on average, lone parents' QoL will improve in the next five

Figure 10.1

Lone Parents' View Of Quality Of Life : Past, Present & Future

a) Previous (5 Years Ago)

b) Present-Day



c) Anticipated (5 Years Hence)

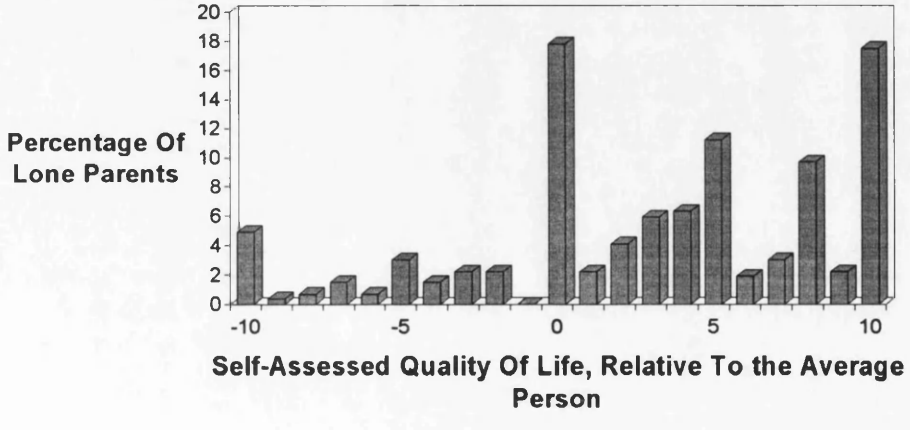


Table 10.2
Changes in Overall Quality of Life[1]

PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT SURVEY POPULATION (Cases)

CHANGES IN QUALITY OF LIFE 1986-91[2]

QUALITY OF LIFE IN 1986	High Decrease		Decrease		Same		Increase		High Increase	
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Below Average	2.7	(2)	13.7	(10)	16.4	(12)	45.2	(33)	21.9	(16)
Average	14.3	(5)	45.7	(16)	25.7	(9)	14.3	(5)	0.0	(-)
Above Average	35.3	(33)	37.6	(35)	8.6	(8)	18.3	(17)	0.0	(-)

Chi-Square: 80.74561 **d.f.:** 8 **Significance:** 0.0000 **Cases:** 201

Source : LPQoL Pilot Questionnaire

ANTICIPATED CHANGES IN QUALITY OF LIFE 1991-96[2]

QUALITY OF LIFE IN 1991	High Decrease		Decrease		Same		Increase		High Increase	
L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V
Below Average	4.7	(6)	16.4	(21)	24.2	(31)	35.2	(45)	19.5	(25)
Average	6.1	(2)	27.3	(9)	39.4	(13)	27.3	(9)	0.0	(-)
Above Average	8.0	(7)	10.3	(9)	70.1	(61)	11.5	(10)	0.0	(-)

Chi-Square: 65.95746 **d.f.:** 8 **Significance:** 0.0000 **Cases:** 248

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)

Notes : All values are based upon the responses to the single measure of overall QoL (Figure 10.1).
: 'High' changes in QoL are those of five points or more on the 21-point scale (refer to Figure 10.1).

years, runs contrary to the experience of the majority of lone parents; *more* lone parents will maintain their current level of QoL. Thus, a more accurate observation is that in the near future, it is perceived that there will be a definite move *toward* a majority of lone parents with an above average QoL. Even if the expected changes are not as optimistic as first seemed to be the case, lone parents are most definitely not pessimistic about their future life chances; yet, there are no indications that the lot of the lone parent is set to improve. Explaining this paradox is now discussed.

10.3.2 EXPLANATIONS OF CHANGES IN LONE PARENTS' QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH TIME

As was the analytical strategy for present-day QoL, explanations for variations among lone parents was pursued by way of the profile characteristics of the lone parent population. However, two types of profile characteristic were used to seek explanation for past and future assessments, i.e. period-specific characteristics (see 10.2.3a) and present-day characteristics. The former are clearly important as lone parents' circumstance at that time is most likely to have a bearing on QoL. The latter also have explanatory potential in that they introduce into the analysis, the character of lone parents at the point when the assessments are made. Together, these are able to account for QoL at different times in a lone parent's life.

10.3.2a Anticipated Quality Of Life

Lone parents who do not belong to a lone parent support group (Table 10.3c), those who have not migrated in recent years (part d) and, particularly, the socio-economically advantaged (parts a & b) are more optimistic over their life prospects for the near future (Table 10.3). For migration behaviour, education status and work status, these results duplicate those for contemporary QoL (Figure 9.1). That is, the positive influence of work, education and a stable local environment extends beyond the present, such that it colours the perceptions of QoL prospects for the years ahead.

The reasons why workers and educated lone parents should be more optimistic (than non workers and uneducated) are obvious and need not stating. In contrast, the reasons why *migration* is related to future life prospects is less clear. Indeed, these lone parent results stand against what would be anticipated for migrants in general. Thus, while it is reasonable to expect that migrants would be more optimistic over their future prospects, the inverse conclusion must be drawn for lone parents. Therefore, it would seem that stability in the local environment contributes toward a greater sense of confidence in the future. More attention to how migration is a very different life experience for lone parents is taken-up later in this chapter.

Consistency of influence upon contemporary and anticipated QoL is not characteristic for support group membership; support group members are no more likely than non members to currently experience a high (or low) QoL, yet are twice as likely to envisage a below-average QoL in the years ahead. This result has wider significance than its empirical message; indeed, it may be suggestive of a prime motivation for lone parents becoming involved with lone parent support groups. That is, the lone parent support groups offer advice & encouragement and provide the means for lone parents to improve their lot. These insights portray lone parent support groups in a different light to that which is typically held. Indeed, a greater emphasis on their enabling function would most certainly lead to a more positive attitude toward them.

Table 10.3
Determinants Of Anticipated Quality Of Life (1996) : Profile Characteristics (1991)

VARIABLE	PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT SURVEY POPULATION (Cases)					
	QUALITY OF LIFE RELATIVE TO AVERAGE PERSON					
	Variate	BELOW		AVERAGE		ABOVE	
(A)	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
a) WORKING[1]							
Yes		7.5	(8)	16.0	(17)	76.4	(81)
No		25.8	(32)	17.7	(22)	56.5	(70)
Chi-Square: 19.06670 **d.f.:** 2 **Significance:** 0.0008 **Cases:** 230							
b) EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT[2]							
High		6.3	(3)	10.4	(5)	83.3	(40)
Low		18.0	(37)	20.5	(42)	61.5	(126)
[3]**Chi-Square:** 8.38330 **d.f.:** 2 **Significance:** 0.0151 **Cases:** 253							
c) ONE PARENT SUPPORT GROUP MEMBER							
Yes		24.0	(24)	15.0	(15)	61.0	(61)
No		12.2	(21)	18.6	(32)	69.2	(119)
Chi-Square: 6.42951 **d.f.:** 2 **Significance:** 0.0402 **Cases:** 272							
d) RECENT MIGRANT[4]							
Yes		17.6	(25)	21.1	(30)	61.3	(87)
No		14.3	(7)	10.2	(5)	75.5	(37)
[5]**Chi-Square:** 8.29850 **d.f.:** 2 **Significance:** 0.0402 **Cases:** 191							

Sources : a-c - LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)
d - LPQoL Main Survey Questionnaire

Notes : 1 - Significant associations were also registered between both current economic activity levels & source of income and anticipated QoL.

: 2 - Significant associations were also registered between both school leaving age & years in education beyond school and anticipated QoL.

: 3 - Statistical summaries refer to QoL as a 'qualitative five-variable' distribution

: 4 - Recent migrants were defined as those who had moved within the last 5 years.

: 5 - Statistical summaries refer to QoL as a 'quantitative quartile' distribution

: * - Weaker associations (at 90-95% level) were also registered between each of the following and anticipated QoL:
* the presence of a one parent support group in their area of residence (> QoL expected where a group was present)
* number of childcare options (> QoL expected by those with more childcare options)
* marital status (> QoL expected by divorced and separated)

: * - All QoL values are based upon the responses to the single measure of overall QoL (Figure 10.1)

As interesting as these insights, is the lack of explanatory influence on other grounds, e.g. perceived changes in family life (10.2.3a & Appendix 4) do not influence QoL expectations in any way. Thus, while Millar (89) demonstrated that repartnering was one of the main routes through which lone parents could improve their material standing, lone parents who envisage repartnering are no more likely than those who will remain lone parents to perceive that their QoL will improve. This can be interpreted in two ways. First, it can be taken as evidence that QoL is not merely the product of economic circumstance; the thesis has shown that while economic status is an important determinant of QoL, it is by no means the only one (throughout 8.3). Second, lone parents may be aware that repartnering does not bring them economic benefits (based on their past experiences); as Vogler (89) and Jenkins (91) have argued so cogently, the intra-household distribution of resources favours men more than women. Thus, repartnered lone parents will not be markedly better-off financially; therefore, their anticipated QoL is comparable to those who intend to remain lone parents in the near future.

More generally, it is the 'shared' outlook among lone parents that is most striking; there are few significant differences among groups of lone parents and ,for work and education status, the extent of difference is far less extensive than is the case for contemporary assessments. Lone parents are optimistic as regards their future life prospects; the differences among lone parents are of secondary importance.

10.3.2b Previous Quality Of Life

What explains the higher QoL (relative to the present) experienced by lone parents five years ago? As Tables 10.4 and 10.5 show, both period-specific and current characteristics contribute toward the explanation.

Clearly, the type of explanation for previous QoL differs significantly from that for the present-day (e.g. Figure 9.1 in 9.2.2), i.e. familial and geographic explanations are relatively more important than socio-economic explanations.

However, the nature of these socio-economic explanations remains the same, i.e. socio-economic advantage is associated with a higher QoL. The specific socio-economic explanations are important, being both suggestive that life changes make little difference to QoL, but also that they make a substantial difference. The finding that socio-economic advantage (owner-occupation and the educated) consistently have a higher QoL, demonstrates that there is more to explaining QoL than life changes. Indeed, the replication of the same relationship for the same lone parents across time is suggestive of a permanency of this feature of their lives, i.e. *despite* life changes, the QoL *among* lone parents remains of the same order. However, the finding that (current) work status has no bearing on previous work status (less so than owner-occupied for present-day lone parents - see 2.4.3b) and that work status *is* very closely associated with overall QoL (Figure 9.1 in 9.2.2), the results in Table 9.4 may reflect than there have been some changes in the work status of present-day lone parents in the last five years (*unlike* before [not a high QoL], some lone parents now work [and

Table 10.4
Determinants Of Previous Quality Of Life (1986) : Profile Characteristics (1991)

VARIABLE	PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT SURVEY POPULATION (Cases)					
	QUALITY OF LIFE RELATIVE TO AVERAGE PERSON					
	Variate	BELOW		AVERAGE		ABOVE
(A)	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
a) DURATION AS A LONE PARENT							
Shortest		12.0	(15)	17.5	(14)	67.5	(54)
Short		17.5	(10)	19.3	(11)	63.2	(36)
Long		46.7	(35)	8.0	(6)	45.3	(34)
Longest		44.4	(28)	9.5	(6)	46.0	(29)
Chi-Square: 29.48477	**d.f.:** 6	**Significance:** 0.0000		**Cases:** 275			
b) LONE PARENT SUPPORT GROUP IN LOCALE							
Yes		24.2	(24)	6.1	(6)	69.7	(69)
No		34.6	(61)	17.6	(31)	47.8	(84)
[1]**Chi-Square:** 30.72860	**d.f.:** 2	**Significance:** 0.0000		**Cases:** 275			
c) ADMINISTRATIVE AREA							
Cunninghame		10.2	(5)	8.2	(4)	81.7	(40)
Glasgow		31.3	(21)	3.0	(2)	65.7	(44)
[1]**Chi-Square:** 18.75183	**d.f.:** 2	**Significance:** 0.0009		**Cases:** 116			
d) PRE-SCHOOL AGE CHILD							
Yes		22.0	(29)	17.4	(23)	60.6	(80)
No		40.3	(56)	10.1	(14)	49.6	(69)
Chi-Square: 11.40455	**d.f.:** 2	**Significance:** 0.0033		**Cases:** 271			
e) HOUSING TENURE							
Owner		7.7	(3)	15.4	(6)	76.9	(30)
Renter		34.8	(74)	12.2	(26)	53.1	(113)
[2]**Chi-Square:** 12.53872	**d.f.:** 2	**Significance:** 0.0057		**Cases:** 252			
f) SUPPORT GROUP MEMBER							
Yes, currently		29.0	(29)	8.0	(8)	63.0	(44)
Never		28.2	(40)	18.3	(26)	53.5	(76)
Yes, previously		46.1	(12)	11.5	(3)	42.3	(11)
[1]**Chi-Square:** 20.32623	**d.f.:** 4	**Significance:** 0.0092		**Cases:** 268			
g) EDUCATION PARTICPATION							
Early school leaver		44.6	(33)	6.8	(5)	48.9	(36)
Middle		27.6	(32)	13.8	(16)	58.6	(68)
Late school leaver		21.8	(14)	18.8	(12)	59.4	(38)
Chi-Square: 18.36445	**d.f.:** 4	**Significance:** 0.0187		**Cases:** 254			

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (Pilot & main versions)

Notes : 1 Statistical summary refers to QoL with a 'qualitative five-variable distribution'

: 2 Statistical summary refers to QoL with a 'quantitative quartile distribution'

: All QoL values are based upon the responses to the single measure of overall QoL (Figure 10.1)

: Weaker associations (at 90-95% level) were also registered between each of the following and previous QoL:

* level of current childcare support (> QoL if currently have childcare)
* main source of income (> QoL if earner)
* age of lone parent (> QoL if younger)
* type of lone parent support group attended (> QoL for Gingerbread members)

Table 10.5
Determinants of Previous Quality of Life (1986) : Profile characteristics (1986)

	PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT SURVEY POPULATION (Cases)									
VARIABLE	QUALITY OF LIFE RELATIVE TO AVERAGE PERSON									
Variate	Very Low		Low		Average		High		Very High	
(A) B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
a) MARITAL STATUS (1986)										
Single/No kids	4.0	(3)	6.7	(5)	20.0	(15)	28.0	(21)	41.3	(31)
Partner/Kids	10.0	(8)	11.3	(9)	16.3	(13)	20.0	(16)	42.5	(34)
Lone Parent	23.8	(25)	26.7	(28)	7.6	(8)	20.0	(21)	21.9	(23)
Chi-Square: 40.48023 **d.f.:** 8 **Significance:** 0.0000 **Cases:** 260										

VARIABLE: Variate	QUALITY OF LIFE RELATIVE TO AVERAGE PERSON							
	Well Below		Below		Above		Well Above	
M : N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V
b) MARITAL STATUS (1986) : CHILDREN (1986)								
Partner With Children :								
With pre-school age child	16.2	(11)	26.5	(18)	10.3	(7)	47.1	(32)
No pre-school age child	0.0	(-)	11.1	(1)	44.4	(4)	44.4	(4)
Chi-Square: 8.171595* **d.f.:** 3 **Significance:** 0.0333* **Cases:** 77								

Sources : LPQoL Questionnaires (Pilot & Main versions)

Notes : All QoL values are based upon the responses to the single measure of overall QoL (Figure 10.1)

: In part 'a' of the table, 'very high' refers to those rating themselves at +6 or more on the 21-point scale referred to above, and 'very low' refers to those rating themselves at -6 or below.

: In part 'b' of the table, the range of responses are divided into quartiles in the analysis above.

Key : * Chi-Square statistic is unreliable as more than 20% of the cells in the contingency table have expected frequencies of less than 5.

have a higher QoL]). In this way, the socio-economic results are suggestive of the role life change may have to play in accounting for QoL.

The findings for support groups are also significant; unlike socio-economic status, the relationship with QoL is significantly *different* for previous and present day QoL, i.e. support group members are more likely to experience an above average QoL for the former, but a below average QoL for the latter. However, this does not imply that the results are inconsistent. On the contrary, it confirms

that lone parent support groups are serving the needs of a particular section of the lone parent community, i.e. those whose QoL has undergone a marked turn for the *worse* in recent years. This conclusion could not be inferred from contemporary characteristics and required time-series analysis to draw attention to it. Nevertheless, it does reinforce an earlier warning that support group membership may not be representative of the lone parent population on the whole (8.3.4d). This is not in itself significant. Indeed, the fact that a *support group* is serving the needs of those who are undergoing the most serious life changes is a positive finding. However, where the opinions of such lone parents are used to represent the lone parent population in aggregate, great caution must be employed.

Similarly, the explanations by duration of lone parenthood and family status appear to contradict the present day result, i.e. duration is (the most) important explanations for previous QoL, while it is not even significant as an explanation for present-day QoL (8.3.4c). Having a pre-school child today is associated with having a low QoL, whereas having a pre-school child five years ago is associated with a higher QoL. The substantive points are not significant as explanations for QoL; rather their significance lies in the fact that they represent life changes of particular importance. Indeed, Table 10.5 is able to explain these in greater detail. First, lone parenthood is associated with a lower QoL (hence lone parents of shorter duration today have a higher QoL), i.e. both lone parents who were single *and* those who lives with their partner five years ago are more likely to consider that they have a higher QoL five years ago than those who were a lone parent. Second, parenthood of younger children is associated with a lower QoL. When the ages of children for partnered parents is used as a basis to compare QoL, it is found that those with pre-school age children five years ago are much more likely to experience a lower QoL. These two results are significant. The former is the only *direct* assessment of lone parents with (themselves as) partnered parents; the self-recognition that lone parent QoL is lower, is consistent with the findings based on external measures of QoL (chpt. 6). The latter demonstrates that the lower QoL of lone parents with pre-school age children is not only characteristic of the lone parent population; partnered parents with pre-school age children have a lower QoL too. However, the key finding is that while life changes are important factors to consider in accounting for changes in QoL through time, the nature of the explanation is consistent through time.

10.4 LONE PARENTS, MIGRATION & QUALITY OF LIFE

The previous section (10.3) described how and examined why the QoL of lone parents varies through time. The 'changes' that are now examined are not QoL outcomes; rather, they are two changes in a lone parent's life, i.e. migration and household formation. The extent to which these two life changes are inter-related is examined in 10.4.3. However, the main concern is to explore how migration contributes toward an understanding of QoL (10.4.2). Beforehand, it is important to consider if some groups of lone parent are more likely to migrate than others (10.4.1).

10.4.1 WHICH LONE PARENTS MIGRATE?

To answer the question 'which lone parents migrate?' comprehensively, four bases of analysis are adopted. First, the issue is raised at a general level for present-day lone parents (10.4.1a). In this exercise, a migrant is defined as a person moving home within the last five years. However, historical migration behaviour of present-day lone parents does not equate with *lone parent* migration. Columns f and g of Table 10.6 compare the characteristics of those who migrated as a lone parent against all lone parents who migrated (col. c of Table 10.6). This line of enquiry is extended to address a third research question; Are some lone parents more likely to migrate into lone parenthood? That is, that particular migration that coincides with a change in family status (10.4.1c) However, to appreciate which lone parents are most likely to migrate into lone parenthood requires more than a review of profile characteristics. Thus, a fourth and final concern of this section is to relate migration behaviour to the causes of lone parenthood, as represented by lone parents' reasons for relationship breakdown (10.4.1d).

10.4.1a Migration Irrespective Of Status

The vast majority of lone parents surveyed had migrated within the last five years. Indeed, as column c of Table 10.6 shows, the only exception to this rule is those with adult children who are equally likely to be non migrants. In general then, migration is a life change that the majority of lone parents have experienced in recent years. Nevertheless, as Table 10.6 shows, the proportion of migrants varies between groups of lone parents.

There are significant differences according to demographic (parts a & b), lone parent related (parts c-f) and socio-economic status (parts g-i). Of the former, age related factors are particularly important, i.e. younger lone parents (part a) and lone parents with younger families (part b) are more likely to have migrated recently. Less conclusive however, is the significance of socio-economic

Table 10.6
Lone Parent Migrants : Profile Characteristics

	PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT MIGRANTS (Cases)					
	MIGRATED WITHIN LAST FIVE YEARS			EVER MIGRATED AS A LONE PARENT (yes)	% of all Mig.	
VARIABLE	VARIATE	Migrant	Non-Migrant			
A	B	C	D	E	F	G
a) AGE LONE PARENT	< 24	96.4	3.6	(28)	20	70
	25-29	86.2	13.8	(58)	27	52
	30-34	67.6	32.4	(37)	20	76
	35-39	57.8	42.2	(45)	21	77
	over 40	59.1	40.9	(22)	10	77
Chi-Square: 21.41364 d.f.: 4 Significance: 0.0003 Cases: 190						
b) FAMILY STRUCTURE						
	Pre-school child only	96.3	3.7	(54)	35	64
	Pre-school and school	75.0	25.0	(36)	16	56
	School age only	65.9	34.1	(82)	44	78
	With Post-school age	50.0	50.0	(16)	5	63
Chi-Square: 22.05360 d.f.: 3 Significance: 0.0001 Cases: 188						
c) CHILDCARE FROM MOTHER						
	Main childcarer	86.8	13.2	(68)	45	73
	Subsidiary childcarer	72.7	27.3	(33)	15	58
	Not childcarer	65.6	34.4	(90)	40	64
Chi-Square: 9.19008 d.f.: 2 Significance: 0.0101 Cases: 191						
d) STATUS						
	Divorced/Separated	68.9	31.1	(122)	59	63
	Never Married	85.0	15.0	(60)	41	73
Chi-Square: 4.66421 d.f.: 1 Significance: 0.0308 Cases: 182						
e) PERCEIVED STATUS						
	Single Parent	79.5	20.5	(146)	87	69
	Other	56.8	43.2	(37)	13	57
Chi-Square: 6.91874 d.f.: 1 Significance: 0.0085 Cases: 183						
f) LENGTH OF TIME AS A LONE PARENT[1]						
	Shorter Half	85.1	14.9	(94)	45	54
	Longer Half	63.9	36.1	(97)	55	84
Chi-Square: 10.15386 d.f.: 1 Significance: 0.0014 Cases: 191						
g) WORK STATUS[2]	Working	65.8	34.2	(76)	40	62
	Non-Working	85.5	14.5	(83)	60	66
Chi-Square: 7.45944 d.f.: 1 Significance: 0.0063 Cases: 159						
h) LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT						
	High Attainers	56.1	43.9	(41)	18	70
	Low Attainers	80.6	19.4	(139)	82	67
Chi-Square: 8.85418 d.f.: 1 Significance: 0.0029 Cases: 180						
i) SELF-PROVISION OF TRANSPORT[3]						
	Mainly By Self	80.0	20.0	(115)	67	68
	Mainly By Others/Services	65.8	34.2	(73)	33	65
Chi-Square: 4.04698 d.f.: 1 Significance: 0.0433 Cases: 188						

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)

Notes : 1 - The sample population was divided into two halves, according to the length of time they had been a lone parent.

2 - Lone parents who were economically active and those who were income earners were also less likely to be migrants

3 - This result does not apply to self-provision at the local level.

status; while the findings for higher educational attainment (part h) and current employment (part g) suggest that socio-economic advantage is associated with *lower* rates of migration, the inverse is the case for transport status (part i). Significantly, several lone parent related characteristics also help explain why some lone parents are more likely to migrate, e.g. those of shorter duration and single never-married lone parents are more likely to be recent migrants. Each of these patterns are suggestive of a particular explanations for migration behaviour. However, before discussing the implications of the results, it must first be established which of these actually *explains* migration. To do so, the inter-relationships between these characteristics should be examined to establish whether an interaction effect is present (4.5.3c).

Figure 10.2 is a chi-square association matrix, which summarises the inter-relationships among the characteristics that are associated with migration; significant associations are identified at three probability levels, i.e. 99.5% (***), 95% (**) and 90% (*). The finding is that the age-related factors are central to any explanation; the age of the lone parent is significantly associated with every other characteristic at the 95% level, while the age of the children is significantly associated with every other characteristic at the 90% level.

What is the effect of age on migration behaviour? It would be expected that younger persons would be more mobile and that families would be more mobile as their space requirements change. However, it is also reasonable to assume that as the children grew older the space demands (and therefore, the likelihood of migration) would increase. Quite clearly, age-related explanations are of the utmost importance. However, in general, families with older children will be headed by an older parent, i.e. there are two contradictory forces to consider; the former favouring more migration by younger parents (and by implication, more migration by younger families), the latter favouring more migration by older families (and by implication, more migration by older parents). The results within Table 10.6 presents survey data that support the former contention (younger parents are more likely to migrate) and refutes the latter (there is less migration among older families). This would appear to favour an explanation of lone parent migration that is based on the demographic character of the lone parent, rather than the character of the lone parent family. In this way, lone parents are no different to other populations in terms of their propensity to migrate.

The next stage in the analysis was to compare the likelihood of migration for the other variables from Table 10.6 for lone parents of similar age groups, i.e. controlling for the age of the lone parent in a three-way crosstabulation. Two conclusions are reached

1) *Fewer Significant Effects*: In general, age accounts for most of the variation between profile characteristics and migration behaviour.
2) *Independent Effect Of The Duration Of Lone Parenthood And Family Structure For Selective Age-Groups*. Among those lone parents who were aged 25-9, 30-4 and over 40, those with younger families were significantly more likely to migrate. Similarly, among lone parents aged 25-9, lone parents of shorter duration were significantly more likely to migrate. Other cohorts of lone parents err toward significance, but there are too few cases to instil confidence in the results, e.g. among lone parents aged between 35-9, the proportion of non-workers who had

Figure 10.2
Profile Characteristics Associated With Migration Behaviour : Chi-Square Association Matrix

		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
a)	AGE	—	***	***	***	***	***	**	**	***
b)	FAMILY STRUCTURE	B	—	***	**	**	***	*	*	***
c)	WORK STATUS		C	—	***	***	**	**		
d)	EDUCATION ATTAINMENT			D	—	***	**			
e)	TRANSPORT PROVISION				E	—	**			
f)	MARITAL STATUS					F	—			
g)	PERCEIVED STATUS						G	—	*	
h)	MOTHER AS CHILDCARER							H	—	*
i)	DURATION AS 1 PARENT								I	—

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (main & pilot versions)

Key : *** - Significant association at the 99.5% level
** - Significant association at the 95% level
* - Significant association at the 90% level

Notes : The substantative relations of significant associations between variables should be interpreted as a positive relation between the following variates:

a) Family Structure - Families with younger children
b) Age of Parent - Younger lone parent
c) Work Status - Not working
d) Education - Lower educational achievement
e) Transport - Provide own means
f) Marital Status - Never married lone parents
g) Perceived Status - Perceive of self as single parent
h) Mother/Childcare - Mother large role in childcare
i) Duration - Lone parents of shorter duration

migrated was 32% higher than that for workers; however, as these results are drawn from only 35 lone parents (25 workers and 10 non-workers), the relationship attains a chi-square of 0.17770, which is far below acceptable confidence limits. This also applies to lone parents aged 30-9 whose mother plays a more prominent childcare role. The confirmation of the independent effect of family structure on general migration behaviour implies that this may also account for some of the variance for duration (or vice versa). Indeed, a three-way crosstabulation proved this to be the case; duration of lone parenthood no longer registered as a significant influence upon migration behaviour (although among lone parents with children of pre-school & school age, migration rates were 15% higher for lone parents of shorter duration).

In summary, for present-day lone parents, migration behaviour is most strongly associated with their age and the age of their family; youth being more associated with migration. Subsidiary factors influencing migration behaviour cannot be confirmed on the basis of the survey data, however, socio-economic character and the presence of the grandmother as childcarer may have an explanatory role within the overall system of explanation.

10.4.1b Lone Parent Migration

The migration behaviour of present-day lone parents does not equate with lone parent migration; the latter is one component of the former, along with migration that was undertaken prior to lone parenthood. The last two columns of Table 10.6 focus on the characteristics of those who have migrated as a lone parent; the character of the lone parent migrant population (col. f) and the proportion of each sub-type of migrant (variate totals for migrants) who migrated as a lone parent (col. g) are each discussed.

Three points should be made concerning the character of lone parent migrants. First, while more of those who migrate are likely to be socio-economically advantaged (rows g to i), *lone parent* migrants are as likely to be disadvantaged socio-economically. This suggests that the composition of migrants differs for lone parent migrations; this, in turn, being indicative of a different type of migration. Second, unlike the aggregate migrating population, *lone parent* migration is not associated with demographic youthfulness (younger are more likely to migrate). On the contrary, these migrations are more likely to be undertaken by older lone parents and those with older children. Thus, for example, while 96% of those aged under 25 who have migrated, did so within the last five years, only 70% of these were migrations as a lone parent. In contrast, while only 59% of those aged over 40 (who have migrated) have migrated within the last five years, 77% of these did so as a lone parent. Thus, *lone parent* migration is more characteristic of older lone parents compared to migration behaviour of (present-day) lone parents in general.

Finally, there are significant differences in the propensity to migrate as a lone parent according to lone parent related characteristics. Thus, those who perceive themselves as a single parent and those who were not engaged in a residential relationship prior to lone parenthood are more likely to migrate as a lone parent, as are those who have been lone parents for a longer time. The duration results are self-explanatory; those who have been lone parents for a longer duration have clearly had more opportunity to migrate as a lone parent. While this conclusion is not significant, it is important in the respect that it is the opposite to general migration propensity, i.e. in general, those who have became lone parents more recently are more likely to have migrated. Once more, the different character of the *lone parent* migrant population is readily apparent. Furthermore, the other lone parent results are somewhat misleading. That is, while single parents are more likely to migrate as lone parents, the extent to which they are relatively more likely to migrate is reduced; for example, while 80% of single parents had migrated within the last five years (of all single parents who had migrated), only 69% of these had migrated as a lone parent.

Thus, it is readily apparent that the *lone parent* migrant population differs in several respects to the population of all lone parents who have migrated. The relevance of such differences is examined in some depth in 10.4.3. Next however, the profile of lone parents who have undertaken a specific type of lone parent migration - a move to become a lone parent - is considered.

10.4.1c Migration Into Lone Parenthood

The formation of lone parent households/families can have far ranging implications for the lives of those involved. One issue of considerable importance is whether or not the lone parent unit is formed in situ, i.e. whether a migration has to be undertaken to form the lone parent unit. The latter may have a disruptive influence on family life, e.g.. moving home over all but the shortest of distances strains existing friendship patterns, at the very time the lone parent is most in need of social support. Clearly, this is an issue worthy of closer attention.

Few characteristics are associated with the likelihood of migrating into lone parenthood (Table 10.7). However, it is the substantive conclusions, rather than the breadth of association that is particularly significant. It was found that divorced lone parents, those with more educational experience and those who currently outside an A.P.T., are more likely to migrate into lone parenthood.

A general comment is that there is no interaction effect between these variables, i.e. each exerts an independent influence upon the likelihood of migrating into lone parenthood. The overall profile of lone parents who migrate into lone parenthood is interesting; in general, they are the more 'advantaged' lone parents (educated, outside deprivation areas and not single or separated). The significance of this is two fold. First, it is suggestive of a vulnerability of lone parents at the point of lone parent formation, i.e. more so than other lone parents, they have to make the move to become a lone parent. A likely expiation for this could be the tenure status of these lone parents in the previous relationship, i.e. these lone parents are more likely to be owner-occupiers (5.4.1e), which, in turn, implies that they are less able to remain (and/or their partners are less willing to relinquish) in the family home after separation (2.3.4b). The problem to be endured by a move into lone parenthood is thus only faced by a particular section of lone parent population. A second point that follows from this is that the characterisation of young girls becoming pregnant (becoming a lone parent) in order to secure accommodation is at odds with what is actually happening (the perception [mainly of Government Ministers] does not match reality). On the contrary, this cohort of lone parents are *less* likely to migrate into lone parenthood. Here, the numerical incidence is controlled, i.e. the fact that teenage mothers comprise such a small proportion of the lone parent population (Table 4.7) does not matter; it is the propensity to migrate that is assessed, not the composition of the population who migrate into lone parenthood.

Table 10.7
Lone Parent Who Migrate Into Lone Parenthood
: Profile Characteristics

	PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT SURVEY POPULATION (Cases)				
VARIABLE		MIGRATE INTO LONE PARENTHOOD			
	Variate	No		Migrant	CASES
A	B	C	D	E F	G
a) STATUS					
	Divorced	48.9	(46)	51.1 (48)	94
	Separated/Never Married	68.5	(100)	35.5 (55)	155
	Chi-Square: 5.23127 d.f.: 1 Significance: 0.0222 Cases: 249				
b) POST-SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL PARTICIPATION(1)					
	Low (none or <1year)	63.7	(114)	36.3 (65)	179
	High (1 year plus)	43.2	(19)	56.8 (25)	44
	Chi-Square: 5.34702 d.f.: 1 Significance: 0.0208 Cases: 223				
c) AREAS OF DEPRIVATION					
	In A.P.T.	69.9	(51)	30.1 (22)	73
	not in A.P.T.	52.7	(77)	47.3 (69)	146
	Chi-Square: 5.19157 d.f.: 1 Significance: 0.0227 Cases: 219				

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)

Notes : 1 - Both those lone parents who were older when they left school and those with higher levels of educational attainment were also significantly more likely to migrate into lone parenthood.

10.4.1d Migration & Relationship Breakdown

In sub-section 10.4.1c, the characteristics associated with migration into lone parenthood were discussed. The data provided significant, but limited insights into the process of migrating into lone parenthood. In this section, another line of inquiry is pursued, i.e. exploring the links between reasons for relationship breakdown and this particular migration act.

The reasons for relationship breakdown were reported in Figure 5.3 in 5.4.3b, where it was noted that the decision to split is based on several factors and that substance abuse (alcohol, drugs etc.), adultery and violence are the factors most responsible for relationship breakdown. In general, the reasons for relationship breakdown are found to help explain the propensity of lone parents to migrate into lone parenthood. Statistical summaries demonstrate that the experience of violence and substance abuse, with the relationship and the lack of family commitment (Table 10.8, part g & h) are each associated with migration tendencies. Indeed, *each* explanation for relationship breakdown

Table 10.8
Lone Parents Who Migrate Into Lone Parenthood : By Reasons For Relationship Breakdown

		PERCENTAGE OF LONE PARENT SURVEY POPULATION (Cases)			
VARIABLE		MIGRATE INTO LONE PARENTHOOD			
	Variate	Migrant		Non-Migrant	
(A)	B	C	D	E	F
a) VIOLENCE					
	REASON	54.9	(50)	45.1	(41)
	Not	33.1	(52)	66.9	(105)
	Chi-Square: 10.44867	d.f.: 1		Significance: 0.0012	
b) SUBSTANCE ABUSE					
	REASON	49.5	(48)	50.5	(49)
	Not	35.8	(54)	64.2	(97)
	Chi-Square: 4.04421	d.f.: 1		Significance: 0.0443	
c) NOT TALKING					
	REASON	47.6	(50)	52.4	(55)
	Not	36.4	(52)	63.6	(91)
	Chi-Square: 2.71992	d.f.: 1		Significance: 0.0991	
d) NOT GETTING ON					
	REASON	43.4	(43)	56.4	(56)
	Not	39.6	(59)	60.4	(90)
e) ADULTERY					
	REASON	36.7	(29)	63.3	(50)
	Not	43.2	(73)	56.8	(96)
f) MONEY PROBLEMS					
	REASON	45.5	(40)	54.5	(48)
	Not	38.4	(61)	61.6	(98)
g) DIDN'T WANT A FAMILY					
	REASON	30.8	(12)	69.2	(27)
	Not	44.8	(90)	55.2	(111)
	Chi-Square: 5.05861	d.f.: 1		Significance: 0.0245	
h) NO TIME FOR FAMILY					
	REASON	50.6	(43)	49.4	(42)
	Not	36.2	(59)	63.8	(104)
	Chi-Square: 4.20315	d.f.: 1		Significance: 0.0403	
i) NO PARTICULAR REASON					
	REASON	22.2	(2)	77.8	(7)
	Not	42.1	(101)	57.9	(139)

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)

Cases : 248

harbours differences in migration propensity; however, only those attaining statistical significance at the 95% probability level are discussed.

First, it was found that where the partner did not want a family, the partner was more likely to leave, while where the partner did not commit time to the family, the lone parent was more likely to leave the family home with children. The contrast is interesting and emphasises the subtle ways in which the lack of family commitment can have widely differing consequences. Indeed, it may be that the reasons for relationship breakdown are a reflection of who took the decision to part company (and migrate), i.e. if it was the partner, then it was judged that he didn't want a family, whereas, if it was the lone parent, then it was judged that the partner has no time for the family. The division is significant, as otherwise it would appear that the lack of family commitment made no difference to migration behaviours.

However, the two key findings are that lone parents who suffer from violence or a partner who risks substance abuse are more likely than those who do not to migrate to become a lone parent. The significance of violence is particularly striking; the chi-square attains a significance at the 99.5% confidence level. These findings cast lone parent migration and household formation in a different light to that in which it is typically cast, i.e. in contrast to the portrayal of lone parents exploiting welfare systems to secure accommodation for themselves and their families, it is found that the most 'deserving' of all lone parents are the ones who are most likely to seek accommodation for themselves and their families. Housing legislation already facilitates this migration; local authorities are obliged to accommodate lone parents who have suffered at the hands of a violent relationship. An issue which should be considered is whether the legislation should be extended to prohibit those who suffer from a partner who abuses substances as well.

In conclusion, the character of lone parent migrants has been examined. At the general level, lone parents' migration tendencies seem to compare to that of the general population, i.e. there is a greater likelihood of migration according to age. However, as the focus becomes more lone parent specific, i.e. first with migration as a lone parent, then migration into lone parenthood, then migration and relationship breakdown, so it becomes apparent that lone parent-based explanations are also important. Of particular significance, is the finding that in accounting for lone parent migrants, it is insufficient to examine differences among groups of lone parents; a need to consider the personal context of family life prior to lone parenthood is a key factor to consider.

10.4.2 MIGRATION AND QUALITY OF LIFE

The migration data from the LPQoL Questionnaire provides the means to engage with current theory regarding the relationship between migration and QoL, as well as offering the opportunity to provide insights on hitherto neglected issues.

As was demonstrated in 8.3.4f, migrants and non migrants hold a slightly different conception of what constitutes a high QoL and their experience of life differs on several counts. Findlay & Rogerson (93) drew the same conclusion from their study of migrants who moved long distances for employment-related reasons. The extent to which the precise nature of these differences for lone

parents are comparable, is examined in 10.4.2a. A second research question to be addressed is whether the specification of a migrant alters these (QoL) results (10.4.2b); two bases for classification are considered, i.e. according to all individuals migrating within a set period (e.g. within the last five years or not) and exclusive year periods (e.g. last migration was either 4/5 years ago or 2/3 years ago or within the last year). Finally, the distance of migration (10.4.2c) is used as a basis for comparative analysis among migrants, i.e. to examine whether there are cleavages among migrant lone parents in terms of their QoL.

10.4.2a Migration And QoL Outcome: Are Lone Parents Conforming Migrants?

As was noted above, in a study of migration and QoL in Great Britain, Findlay & Rogerson (93) found that migrants and non migrants hold a different view of what constitutes a high QoL, Is the extent and nature of these differences in QoL outlook between lone parents who are migrants/non migrants comparable? Three similarities are apparent (Table 10.9):

1) *Limited Difference.* Differences do exist. Just as Findlay & Rogerson (93) found that non migrants were more concerned with crime, housing, health and financial matters, so lone parent non migrants are more concerned with health and work. However, both studies show that there are more similarities than differences between migrants and non migrants.
2) *Migrants Are Less Concerned.* In all but one of the cases where significant differences exist, a higher proportion of non-migrants consider the domain to be very important.
3) *Domain Differences.* Of the seven domains that are measured in both studies, three exhibit the same migrant/non-migrant relationship:

   i) No significant difference between migrants and non migrants, i.e. service provision and leisure.

   ii) More important to migrants, i.e. health.

   However, this leaves four domains in which the differences between migrant and non migrant for the lone parent population are dissimilar to that of the general population:

   i) No difference migrant/non migrant for lone parents, but more important for non-migrants in general, i.e. crime and housing.

   ii) No difference for the general population, but more important for lone parent non-migrants, i.e. opportunities to better yourself.

   iii) More important for lone parent migrants but less important for migrants in general, i.e. financial situation.

The cumulative result of these differences is indicative of the different context of lone parent migration to that of the general population. This is particularly evident with respect to work and financial situation; work being important to far fewer *lone parent* migrants than it is to other migrants and (related to this point) lone parent migrants being more concerned than non migrating lone parents with their financial situation, while migrants in general as less concerned than non

Table 10.9

Migrants' and Non-Migrants' View of Quality of Life : Lone Parents & Findlay & Rogerson (92)

	% CONSIDERING DOMAIN TO BE AT LEAST 'VERY IMPORTANT' TO THEM							
	Thesis				Findlay & Rogerson (92)			
DOMAINS	Migrant	Not	X^2	%D	Migrant	Not	X^2	%D
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Crime	96.4	97.3			87.4	93.2	**	[1]
					84.0	91.8	**	[1]
Family Life	95.1	94.9						
Control	93.6	94.9						
Housing	89.4	88.8			78.2	77.5		
					45.1	48.4		
					42.1	54.8	**	[2]
					38.3	51.5	**	[3]
Health	87.9	96.3	*	[1]	87.4	95.2	**	[1]
Financial	83.7	78.2		[1]	85.4	91.3	**	[1]
					75.2	75.4		
Opportunities	72.3	79.7		[1]				
Services	70.2	69.2			81.2	85.7		
Advice & Support	64.7	68.4						
Neighbourhood	60.6	70.9		[2]				
Transport	56.1	57.1						
Work	45.7	69.4	***	[3]	75.5	72.9		
					68.8	66.0		
Leisure	43.2	43.0			65.0	58.9		[1]
					55.8	54.5		
Others' Attitude	29.8	38.5		[1]				

Source: LPQoL Questionnaires (Pilot & Main versions)

Legend: X^2 - Chi-Square ... * (90% probability) ** (95%) *** (99%)
%D : Difference between % Migrants and % Non-Migrants
... [1] 5-10% [2] >10-15% [3] >15%

Notes: Findlay & Rogerson's domains were as follows:
* Crime - Violent then Non-Violent Crime
* Housing - Cost of owner-occupied, cost of private rented, quality of council housing, access to c.housing
* Health - Health care provision
* Financial - Cost of living then wage levels
* Services - Shopping facilities
* Work - Employment prospects, travel-to-work-time
* Leisure - Leisure facilities, Sports facilities

migrants. That the economic (work) may not be the *cause* of lone parent migration is taken up in 10.4.3.

Comparing the proportional distribution of responses also emphasises that lone parents in general are less concerned. To conclude, lone parents compare to the wider population in terms of the existence of general differences between migrants and non-migrants in terms of their outlook on QoL. However, in terms of specific domains, there are as many differences as similarities, and

indeed, for the financial domain contradictory experiences are recorded. Such differences seem to be indicative of a different experience of migration for lone parents. This theme will be explored in 10.4.3.

10.4.2b Defining Migrants, Influencing QoL

Table 10.10 states the proportion of migrants/non-migrants who judge each life-domain to be at least 'very important'; figures for three definitions of a migrant are presented, i.e. moved within five years, moved within three years and moved within one year. Comparing the extent of difference between migrant/non migrant for each conceptualisation, demonstrates what influence (if any) the *definition* of a migrant exerts upon the results. Here, the stringency of the comparative basis is relaxed to include all differences where the proportion of migrants (compared to non migrants) who rate a domain to be important, is at least five percent higher or lower.

The specification of a migrant exerts a considerable influence on the results. Thus, if a migrant is defined as a person who has moved within the last five years, proportional differences of at least five percent between migrants and non migrants are registered for six domains (health, financial, opportunities, neighbourhood, work and others' attitude). For three years, such differences are only evident for the financial, neighbourhood and work domains (col. g of Table 10.10). Finally, there are significant differences of opinion for family life, housing, financial situation, opportunities, advice & support, neighbourhood, transport, leisure and others' attitude, if a migrant is defined as a person who has moved house within the last 12 months (column j of Table 10.1o).

The evidence of difference is interesting in itself, but they are particularly revealing when looked at in time-sequence, i.e. the changing level of importance as the migrant becomes integrated into the community (i.e. ceases to be classed as a migrant). To focus on this theory, the proportion of migrants who rate each domain to be very important is discussed in Table 10.11 for exclusive categories, i.e. unlike Table 10.10, where all migrants within the last five years are discussed under col. b, the 'equivalent' column of Table 10.11 presents data for those who migrated four or five years ago, but have not moved since, i.e. those who have had longer to adjust to their surroundings. Nevertheless, it is useful if the discussion starts at a more general level by considering insights available through Table 10.10.

In this process of adjustment (from migrant to 'established' resident) it is reasonable to expect that the longer the period since migration, the less marked these differences are between migrant and non-migrant will become. The data within Table 10.10 offers some support for 'adjustment theory'; the differences between migrants/non-migrants are reduced over time for family life, housing, transport, leisure and to a lesser extent, for opportunities, services and advice & support. Of the remainder, the differences between migrants and non migrants remain the same. The striking exception to this rule is work, where differences grow as the migrant lone parent becomes more established in the community. The results may be indicative of the problems faced by lone parents in maintaining their employee status after migration, i.e. while immediately after migration, migrants attempt to continue

Table 10.10
Migrant Specification And Views On Quality of Life

% CONSIDERING DOMAIN TO BE AT LEAST 'VERY IMPORTANT' TO THEM

	DID LONE PARENT MIGRATE WITHIN ...								
	Last 5 YEARS			Last 3 YEARS			Last 1 YEAR		
DOMAIN	Migrant	No	%D	Migrant	No	%D	Migrant	No	%D
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
Crime	96.4	97.3		96.2	97.4		94.8	97.5	
Family Life	95.1	94.9		94.4	95.6		91.7	96.3	[1]
Control	93.6	94.9		93.4	94.7		93.3	94.4	
Housing	89.4	88.8		87.7	90.4		84.7	90.7	[1]
Health	87.9	96.3	[1]*	88.7	93.0		89.8	91.4	
Financial	83.7	78.2	[1]	84.9	78.8	[1]	86.4	80.0	[1]
Opportunities	72.3	79.7	[1]	73.6	76.3		66.7	78.1	[2]
Services	70.2	69.2		70.8	69.0		73.3	68.6	
Advice/Support	64.7	68.4		67.3	64.9		74.6	62.9	[2]
Neighbourhood	60.6	70.9	[2]	58.9	69.3	[2]	56.7	67.1	[2]
Transport	56.1	57.1		59.0	54.1		62.7	54.1	[1]
Work	45.7	69.4	[3]*	50.0	58.3	[1]	51.9	55.2	
Leisure	43.2	43.0		43.3	43.0		49.1	41.0	[1]
Others Attitudes	29.8	38.5	[1]	33.0	32.7		25.0	35.8	[2]

Source: LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)

Legend: X^2 - * Also significant difference identified via the Chi-Square test (90% probability level for health, 99% level for work)

with their employment, only for the new personal/geographical context to render this impractical (too distant from previous employment, previous childcare support, too much time pressure involved). This is of course, all the more significant as the results sharply contrasts a priori speculation that a as a migrant becomes more established in their new residential environment and as the child grows older, so the lone parent is more likely to gain employment; the migration findings shed new insights into the working experiences of this particular group of lone parents.

What then is the wider experience of lone parent migrants across the fourteen domains surveyed (Table 10.11)? Four trends can be identified within Table 10.11, each of which is consistent (1 & 2), or has the potential to become consistent with (3 & 4) the adjustment thesis. These are described away from the most recent migrants for each domain:

Table 10.11
Migrants, By Most Recent Migration,
& Views of Quality of Life : Lone Parents

	% CONSIDERING DOMAIN TO BE AT LEAST 'VERY IMPORTANT' TO THEM		
	MOST RECENT MIGRATION (Exclusive Categories)		
	4or5 YRS. AGO	2or3 YRS. AGO	WITHIN YEAR
A	B	C	D
Crime	97.1	97.9	94.8
Family Life	97.1	97.9	91.7
Control	94.3	93.5	93.3
Housing	94.3	91.5	84.7
Health	85.7	87.2	89.8
Financial	80.0	83.0	86.4
Opportunities	68.6	82.6	66.7
Services	68.6	67.4	73.3
Advice & Support	57.1	57.8	74.6
Neighbourhood	65.7	61.7	56.7
Transport	47.1	54.3	62.7
Work	32.3	47.6	51.9
Leisure	42.9	36.2	49.1
Others' Attitude	20.0	43.5	25.0

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot and main versions)

Cases : 127-142

1) Adjustment After Domains Became Less Important Through Time
   : Services and Advice & Support
2) Adjustment After Domains Became More Important Through Time
   : Crime and Family Life
3) Domains Become Increasingly Important
   : Housing, Neighbourhood, Work and Transport
4) Domains Become Less Important
   : Health and Financial
5) No Consistent Trend
   : Self-control, Others attitudes, Opportunities and Leisure

Thus, there are a set of domains which migrants adjust to in the short-term (groups 1 & 2 above) and there is a set of domains that take longer to adjust to (3 & 4 above). However, four domains do not conform to adjustment theory. Alternative explanations for each of these deviants can be postulated. For example, the finding that recent migrants (within 12 months) are less concerned than migrants of

two-to-three years ago with others' attitudes, may reflect their lower interaction with other persons in the areas to which they move. Less involvement would reduce their awareness of hostile attitudes which would make this a less important issue. From this relatively higher concern among medium term migrants, the attitude of others returns to the lower level for migrants of four or five years ago. This may reflect a growing indifference to others' attitude as time passes. Of course, these explanations are also adjustments. The former is an adjustment from migration, the latter an adjustment to the local environment. Thus, it may even be the case that what appear to challenge adjustment theory, actually represents a series of adjustments to migration. Thus, when defining a migrant, it is not a matter of deciding which (singular) particular time is the best and most accurate; rather, the decision should consider what *stage* of the adjustment is the most appropriate in light of the goals of the research.

10.4.2c Spatial Scale

Findlay and Rogerson's analysis of migration and QoL (Findlay & Rogerson 91) compared inter-regional migrants' reasons for moving with those of intra-regional migrants. The importance of spatial scale in furthering an understanding of lone parent migration and QoL is now considered:

Table 10.12 presents two tabulations which explore whether the distance of migration (defined by administrative areas) is related to lone parents' definition of what constitutes a high QoL. What is significant is the similarity between local migrants (column b) and national migrants (column e); for nine of the fourteen domains proportionally differences of less than five per cent are evident. However, larger differences of opinion are evident for the remaining five domains. Thus, it would appear that spatial scale has a selective influence for specific domains rather than a general influence, i.e. more local migrants are concerned with service provision, other peoples' attitude towards them and work; more national migrants are concerned with housing and financial matters. The two largest differences of opinion were for work (one half of local migrants were concerned, compared to one third of national migrants) and other peoples' attitudes (almost twice as many local migrants were concerned). Findlay and Rogerson (91) found that employment opportunities were more important for long distance migrants; the inverse holds true for lone parents. Once again, the "work' results emphasise the different context of lone parent migration; in general, national migration is related to job opportunities - for lone parents, national migration is less likely to be job-induced. Rather, it is more likely to involve a return (at the point of relationship breakdown or soon thereafter) to the wider family/area where the lone parent was raised. The greater concern among migrants over what others' think may reflect that lone parent migration coincides with a change of family status at this time, e.g. previously single females or divorced/separated partners being more concerned with being a lone parent. Once again, the specific focus on migration-based differences has raised some interesting divisions among the lone parent population that would otherwise pass unnoticed.

Table 10.12
Migrants' View of Quality of Life & Distance of Migration

DOMAIN	PROPORTION OF MIGRANTS EVALUATING DOMAIN TO BE AT LEAST VERY IMPORTANT			
	DISTANCE OF LAST MOVE			
	DISTRICT COUNCIL		NATIONAL REGION	
	Within	Outwith	Within	Outwith
A	B	C	D	E
Crime	97.1	96.9	92.5	93.1
Family Life	94.4	89.9	90.2	89.7
Control	94.4	93.9	97.6	91.2
Housing	86.3	92.9	92.5	93.1
Health	89.1	85.9	87.8	84.5
Financial	80.0	89.9	85.4	93.1
Services	73.2	63.3	63.4	63.2
Opportunities	70.9	70.4	73.2	68.4
Advice/Support	67.8	63.5	51.3	71.9
Neighbourhood	59.2	57.6	56.1	58.6
Transport	57.8	56.1	58.5	54.4
Work	51.6	45.2	60.5	34.5
Leisure	46.2	41.7	41.0	42.1
Others Attitude	31.9	21.4	26.8	17.5

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (main & pilot versions)

Cases : 127-142

In conclusion, the comparison of the lone parent migrant/non migrants' outlook on QoL with that of others has been a worthwhile exercise. In particular, it has drawn attention to the different context of lone parent migration and has shown how lone parents' lives are affected after migration. These are issues that are worthy of more detailed research. However, the key finding is that in understanding the link between migration and QoL, the subject of study is all-important, i.e. the results owe less to migration per se and more to the context of migration, which can differ dramatically from subject group to subject group.

10.4.3 LONE PARENTS, LONE PARENTHOOD AND MIGRATION

In this final section, the characteristics of migration are compared across different phases of lone parenthood. Does migration behaviour change as a person becomes a lone parent? For example, when people become lone parents, do they become more likely to migrate to areas of deprivation? Classification of each move relative to lone parenthood status facilitates three enquiries:

1) *Lone Parent Migration.* The migration behaviour of *lone parents* can be analysed. This distinguishes between respondents earlier migrations within a two parent family and/or migrations before parenthood, from their migration as a lone parent.
2) *Changing Migration Behaviour* - The Effect Of Lone Parent Status. This can be estimated by comparing migration prior to lone parenthood with lone parent migration for present-day lone parents.
3) *Changing Intra-Stage Migration Behaviour.* Initial moves *as a* lone parent can be compared with later moves *as a* lone parent and the differences explored.

The survey provides information of 223 moves before lone parenthood, 68 moves into lone parenthood and 158 moves during lone parenthood. Sufficient numbers are available to study the two previous migrations before lone parenthood (98 cases of the last move before lone parenthood & 69 cases of the second last move before lone parenthood) and the first two moves as a lone parent (116 cases of the first move as a lone parent & 31 cases of the second move as a lone parent). The temporal dimension is also important, e.g. does lone parent migration differ between those who have recently become lone parents and those who have been lone parents for longer duration. That is, if it is assumed that moves away from the point of lone parent transition are not directly associated with lone parent formation, then it may be useful to group such moves together; thus, there are 104 cases of 'earlier' moves prior to lone parenthood (including 2nd, 3rd and 4th moves prior to lone parenthood) and 42 cases of 'later' moves as a lone parent (including 2nd, 3rd and 4th move as a lone parent). Two comparative contexts are discussed, i.e. the social context of migration (10.4.3a) and the spatial context (10.4.3b).

10.4.3a Migration And Lone Parenthood: The Social Context

Three such 'social' aspects were considered (Table 10.13), i.e. migration frequency, reasons for moving and tenancy arrangements; the character of lone parent migration (col. g), changes over the course of lone parenthood (col. c, e & g) and changes in the character of migration as a lone parent (col. i & k) are discussed for each.

Lone parent migration follows soon after a previous migration; two fifths (42.4%) of moves as a lone parent were made within two years of an earlier move and three quarters (77.8%) of moves were made within five years of a previous move. More generally, the gap between migrations was less as the course of lone parenthood wore on; just over one quarter of moves into lone parenthood were made within two years of a previous move (29%), as were less than one tenth of moves before lone parenthood (7%). The trend continues for later moves as a lone parent compared to earlier moves as a lone parent; whereas one third of the first move as a lone parent was within two years of the last move (34%), almost two thirds of subsequent moves as a lone parent followed so close to a previous move (65%).

Table 10.13
Migration & Lone Parenthood : Social Characteristics

	% of Migrations (Cases)									
	Stage of Lone parenthood						Lone Parent Moves			
	Before		Transition		During		1st move		2nd+	
(A) B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
Years Since Previous Migration										
1	2.2	(1)	16.1	(5)	15.9	(18)	13.4	(11)	22.6	(7)
2	4.3	(2)	12.9	(4)	26.5	(30)	20.7	(17)	41.9	(13)
3	17.4	(8)	9.7	(3)	18.6	(21)	19.5	(16)	16.1	(5)
4 or 5	10.9	(5)	22.6	(7)	16.8	(19)	19.5	(16)	9.7	(3)
6 to 8	32.6	(15)	35.5	(11)	14.1	(16)	15.6	(13)	9.7	(3)
more than 8	32.6	(15)	3.2	(1)	8.1	(13)	11.0	(9)	0.0	(-)
Reason For Moving										
Family Change	55.5	(121)	--		59.6	(93)	64.9	(74)	48.8	(15)
Housing Problem	15.6	(34)	--		19.9	(31)	14.9	(17)	25.8	(8)
Loational Issue	21.1	(46)	--		7.1	(11)	9.6	(11)	0.0	(-)
Other	7.8	(17)	--		13.5	(21)	10.5	(12)	25.8	(8)
Type of Reason										
Positive	37.2	(71)	3.2	(2)	13.8	(16)	12.0	(15)	11.1	(4)
Responsive	45.5	(87)	7.9	(5)	44.0	(51)	43.8	(35)	44.4	(16)
Negative	17.3	(33)	88.9	(56)	42.2	(49)	41.3	(33)	44.4	(16)
Share of Head of Household After Migration										
Yes	45.7	(102)	5.7	(6)	41.4	(63)	42.5	(48)	38.5	(15)
No	54.3	(121)	93.8	(97)	58.6	(89)	57.5	(65)	61.5	(24)

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)
Notes : Reasons for moving at point of lone parent formation are invariably (by definition) related to family change.

These results emphasise the temporary nature of lone parent migration. It follows that migration is a characteristic that is closely associated with lone parents. The frequency with which lone parents migrate makes the results discussed within this section all the more important. However, the frequency results provide significant insights in themselves, i.e. the changes over the course of lone parenthood demonstrate that present day lone parents had a stable residential history prior to becoming lone parents. Thus, the temporary nature and frequency of migration are characteristics that are specifically associated with migration pertaining to lone parenthood.

The character of lone parent migration raises the question of the causes of this migration behaviour. At a general level, these differ quite dramatically to the general reasons underlying migration among the wider population. The most obvious expression of this is the classification scheme used to discuss the main expiation given by lone parents. The survey respondents gave 446 separate reasons for their migration movements. However, the type of reasons given differed so much from those generally cited by migrants (e.g. employment, family changes, cost of living, quality of life) that a lone parent specific classification scheme was adopted (Table 10.13).

In general, and as for the wider community, family change plays a significant role in accounting for lone parent migration; three fifths (59.6%) of migrations as a lone parent reflected this single reason. The significance of family change extends right across the course of lone parenthood (all moves into lone parenthood, of course, reflected changes in family composition). Similarly, moves as a lone parent are also largely as a result of this factor, although there are indications that later moves as a lone parent owe less to family changes and more to housing problems or other, more respondent-specific explanations.

A significant insight from these findings is that family change was also an important reason for migration *before* the respondent became a lone parent, e.g. many of the last moves before becoming a lone parent were moves into a two parent household. Here is an example of the (decision-making) context persisting across the course of lone parenthood. A less obvious conclusion that can be drawn from the table is that people become less discriminative of where they want to live when they become a lone parent; 21% of moves before lone parenthood reflected locational reasons, only 10% of the first moves as a lone parent did likewise, while none of the later moves as a lone parent were for such reasons. This is a significant geographical insight, which suggests that constraint is more characteristic of lone parent migration than opportunity; the geography of lone parent migration will be examined in grater depth in the next section (10.4.3b).

In the meantime, it is useful to classify the nature of reasons cited for migration according to whether they reflect positive reasons (opportunity), responsive reasons (enforced moves) or negative reasons (enforced or voluntary moves to overcome an unacceptable residential situation). In general, lone parent migrations are not undertaken for positive reasons (only one in eight [12%] are). However, there is no trend in response motivations across the course of lone parenthood. Rather, the transitional moves (moves into lone parenthood) are strongly characterised by such negative reasons (nine tenths reflect such reasons); more opportunistic reasons are cited for moves prior to lone parenthood (two-fifths [37%] are for positive reasons). There are no changes in the type of reason cited to explain lone parent migrations through time.

Clearly, constraint is indeed a characteristic of lone parent migration; this is particularly so for moves into lone parenthood. It is significant to note that negative stimuli are not only associated with moves close to the point of transition. That is, there is no evidence to suggest that the forces underlying lone parent migration improve as time passes.

Finally, the tenancy arrangement should be discussed. Earlier in the thesis, the findings of Bradshaw & Millar (91) that lone parents make much use of temporary accommodation were

referred to (2.4.3). The results from the LPQoL questionnaire are consistent with this finding, given that they show that the majority of lone parents share accommodation with others after they migrate (59%). Once again, there is no transition across the course of lone parenthood, i.e. the proportion who are heads of household is similar for moves before becoming a lone parent, while the moves into lone parenthood are overwhelming moves to share accommodation with others. Later migrations as a lone parent do not result in greater independence for lone parents; indeed, if anything the proportion who share accommodation with others actually rises after more of the subsequent moves as a lone parent.

In one sense these results are counter intuitive. That is, the earlier finding that c85% of lone parents are heads of household (Table 4.7) runs contrary to the finding that most lone parents ended up sharing accommodation after their last migration. However, the finding is not erroneous; rather, it further emphasises the temporary nature of much lone parent migration (two moves plus, includes second, third and fourth moves as a lone parent; more of these earlier moves were into shared accommodation, more of the final move was into self-contained accommodation). A second interesting conclusion to be drawn is that the shared nature of much accommodation after lone parenthood, is merely a continuation of the present day lone parent populations' residential history. That is, independent living was a minority experience after the last previous move before lone parenthood. Thus, far from being a distinctive characteristic of lone parent migration, shared accommodation is a continuation of earlier experiences.

In conclusion, this review of the social context of lone parent migration has clarified some important issues; in some respects lone parent migration differs from non lone parent migration (time elapsed since last move), in others it is a continuation of previous experiences (tenancy). Furthermore, there are as many changes between lone parent migrations (the move into lone parenthood, the fist move as a lone parent and all subsequent moves as a lone parent) as there are between these and earlier (non lone parent) moves. However, the key characteristics are the reduced importance of locational factors in lone parents' decision making, the different reasons (more family change) to other population groups and the temporary character of lone parent migration. In these important ways, the context of lone parent migration differs significantly to that of other population groups.

10.4.3b Migration And Lone Parenthood: The Geographical Context

The geography of lone parenthood and migration is examined using administrative areas, deprivation ratings and 'lone parent' character of locations. Within Britain, public sector housing is mainly provided by District Councils (hereafter, D.C.). While each D.C. has managerial responsibility, it is common for them to divide their territory into housing districts, and in turn to subdivide these into sub-areas for administrative purposes. Some authorities subdivide their sub-areas into local housing areas. For the analysis of the survey data, four mutually-exclusive macro-level areal units were added, i.e. within Regions, within national regions of Britain, within Britain and international, to provide a comprehensive classification of lone parent movement between administrative areas.

Over what distance do the majority of lone parent migrations take place (Table 10.14)? Lone parent migrations are typically local ones over a short distance; one quarter (24%) are within the same housing sub-area and four fifths are within the same district council area (80%). While far fewer moves before lone parenthood are local, there is no transition across the stages of lone parenthood; rather, there is a disjuncture for moves into lone parenthood. A significant minority of these moves are long-distance migrations one quarter (24%) being a national scale migration (e.g. a move from England to Scotland). However, the trend toward localised migration is evident for later moves as a lone parent; whereas 53% of the first move as a lone parent was within the local housing area, 72% of later moves as a lone parent are at this geographical scale.

Two conclusions can be drawn from this data. First, and most importantly, lone parent migrations are localised. This means that the disruption to the lives of those within the lone parent family is minimised (in terms of extra-familial relations); thus, there would be continuity of schooling for the children, than discontinuity as they adjust to lone parent living. However, a second point to note, is that a significant proportion of moves into lone parenthood are of the opposite character, i.e. national level migrations (generally to return to the lone parents' home area/extended family). While there is the obvious disruption to lone parents' (and their childrens') lives, the support of family and familiarity of known surroundings compensates for this life change.

Is lone parent migration characterised by a shift of lone parents into areas of deprivation? Is there a spatial component to the downward mobility of lone parents in the housing market (2.4.3b)? Row b of Table 10.14 indicates that one third of lone parent migrations were into areas of deprivation. Once again however, a comparison across the life course of lone parenthood dispels any suggestion of a shift into these areas. Thus, while lone parents are more likely to move into an APT on becoming a lone parent (as opposed to before they became a lone parent), the move into lone parenthood is considerably more likely not to be one into an area of deprivation (less than one fifth [18%] of such moves are into areas of deprivation). The chances of moving into an area of deprivation as a lone parent are similar from earlier moves as a lone parent to later moves.

However, these results do not reflect the mobility changes; rather they reflect the mobility outcomes. That is, they do not account for whether migrants were moving from an area of deprivation in the first instance. Row c of Table 10.14 provides the data that can address this issue directly. Thus, an overwhelming majority of lone parents move into an area of similar (deprivation) status on becoming a lone parent (84%). In general, this is typical of moves across the course of lone parenthood, although it is noticeable that more moves before lone parenthood were moves out of deprivation areas (17%, compared to only 5% of lone parent migrations). The stability of deprivation area status is also a characteristic of lone parent migrations through time, i.e. it becomes increasingly likely that lone parent migrations will be to areas of a similar deprivations status (90% of the second or subsequent move as a lone parent is to an area of similar deprivation status).

Two conclusions should be drawn from this data. First, the shifts in area status occur before lone parenthood. Thus, given that lone parent migrations are more likely to be into deprivation areas (row b) and that lone parent migrations are less likely to involve a change in deprivation status, it

Table 10.14
Migration & Lone Parenthood : Spatial Characteristics

	% of Migrations (Number)									
	Stage of Lone parenthood						Lone Parent Moves			
	Before		Transition		During		1st move		2nd+	
(A) B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
a) Housing Administration Area										
Sub-Area	10.7	(23)	6.3	(4)	24.2	(37)	24.1	(27)	28.6	(10)
Local	24.1	(52)	22.2	(14)	32.7	(50)	28.6	(32)	42.9	(18)
District Council	24.7	(53)	33.3	(21)	23.5	(36)	25.8	(29)	19.0	(8)
Regional Council1	9.1	(41)	7.9	(50)	6.5	(10)	8.0	(9)	2.4	(1)
National Region	6.0	(13)	6.3	(4)	5.2	(8)	4.5	(5)	7.1	(3)
National	8.4	(18)	14.3	(9)	5.9	(9)	6.5	(7)	2.4	(1)
International	7.0	(15)	9.5	(6)	2.0	(3)	1.8	(2)	2.4	(1)
b) Move into an Area of Priority Treatment										
Yes	26.1	(40)	17.5	(10)	33.3	(45)	32.0	(32)	36.8	(14)
No	73.9	(113)	82.5	(47)	66.7	(90)	68.0	(66)	63.2	(24)
c) Area of Priority Treatment										
Move into APT	12.0	(15)	5.9	(2)	12.3	(14)	14.5	(12)	6.6	(2)
Same	71.2	(89)	79.4	(27)	82.5	(94)	79.5	(66)	90.3	(28)
Move out of APT	16.8	(21)	14.7	(5)	5.3	(6)	6.0	(5)	3.2	(1)
d) Settlement Type On Arrival										
De-industrialising	13.4	(24)	14.1	(9)	18.5	(28)	18.2	(20)	19.5	(8)
Rural	6.1	(11)	10.9	(7)	11.3	(17)	8.2	(9)	19.5	(8)
Primary/Sec. Based	22.9	(41)	23.4	(15)	27.2	(41)	27.3	(30)	26.8	(11)
Peri-Urban	7.7	(13)	6.3	(4)	7.9	(12)	9.1	(10)	4.9	(2)
Commuter	2.2	(4)	9.4	(6)	2.6	(4)	2.7	(3)	2.4	(1)
City (GLASGOW)	43.8	(78)	46.9	(19)	27.8	(42)	29.1	(32)	24.4	(10)
New Town	4.5	(8)	6.3	(4)	4.6	(7)	5.5	(6)	2.4	(1)
e) Change Of Settlement Type										
Yes	27.8	(43)	25.0	(11)	16.7	(22)	19.6	(19)	8.6	(3)
No	72.3	(112)	75.0	(33)	83.3	(110)	80.4	(78)	91.4	(32)
f) Well-Being Rating of Area										
Lower after move	22.0	(28)	17.2	(50)	17.9	(15)	17.8	(11)	18.2	(4)
Same	56.0	(103)	42.6	(20)	73.8	(96)	64.5	(40)	77.3	(17)
Higher after move	16.6	(21)	18.1	(7)	14.2	(12)	17.8	(11)	4.5	(1)
g) Number of Lone Parents in Area										
Fewer after move	23.9	(46)	42.5	(20)	13.8	(18)	14.0	(13)	18.2	(4)
Same	56.0	(103)	42.6	(20)	73.8	(96)	72.0	(67)	77.3	(17)
More after move	20.1	(32)	14.9	(7)	12.4	(14)	14.0	(13)	4.5	(1)
h) Number of One Parent Groups in Area										
Fewer after move	12.0	(20)	10.9	(5)	9.2	(12)	10.4	(10)	5.7	(2)
Same	72.5	(121)	80.4	(37)	79.4	(104)	77.1	(74)	85.8	(30)
More after move	15.6	(26)	8.7	(4)	11.5	(15)	12.5	(12)	8.6	(3)

Source : LPQoL Questionnaires (pilot & main versions)

Notes : Regional migration is not restricted to moves between different district council authorities in Strathclyde; it includes all moves between district authorities that are also within the same regional authority.

follows that the shift into deprivation status predates lone parenthood. That is, downward residential mobility is evident for the people who are more likely to become lone parents, but not for lone parents themselves. This refinement on the existing knowledge is an important one, i.e. it is suggestive of less discrimination against lone parents in the housing market than is commonly expressed by lone parent pressure groups. The issue is clearly an interesting one and one which should be examined in greater depth in subsequent studies.

Does lone parent migration entail a drift toward the city? Are the higher concentrations of lone parents in the city a reflection of migration patterns or an uneven geography of lone parent formation. The survey responses find no evidence of a drift toward the city by lone parents. Indeed, on the contrary, there is a move from the city by lone parents; 44% of moves prior to lone parenthood were moves to a city location, as were 47% of moves into lone parenthood, compared to only 28% of moves as a lone parent. The trend continues across the duration of lone parenthood, with fewer lone parents moving into a city home after their first move as a lone parent. The drift actually appears to be one toward rural areas; whereas only 6% of moves before lone parenthood were to rural areas, one fifth of second or subsequent moves as a lone parent took the lone parent to rural environs. This is consistent with the earlier comment that much lone parent migration involves a move back to the lone parents home area. Thus, in response to the initial question, it appears that the geography of lone parenthood owes more to the geography of family formation than migration. Indeed, given that there is a drift *from* the city during lone parenthood, this implies that lone parent formation is even greater in city areas than the incidence of lone parents would suggest. Yet again, here is another issue that population geographers should seek to explore.

Finally, is it the case that lone parents are being concentrated in certain areas? As row g of Table 10.14 shows, three quarters (74%) of lone parent migrations are to areas of a similar lone parent composition. However, this migration outcome differs quite dramatically across the course of lone parenthood. Thus, migrations before lone parenthood are twice as likely to be to areas of more *and* less lone parents, while moves into lone parenthood are more typically to areas of fewer lone parents. the stability of lone parent character of location after migration increases for later moves as a lone parent. The reasons for this outcome are similar to those posited for migration (refer above) and reflect the fact that lone parents are over concentrated in areas of deprivation (Table 1.1)

What then are the key conclusions that should be drawn from this review of the geography of lone parent migration? First, the results dispute some of the received knowledge on lone parents' migration experiences. That is, lone parent migration per se is not associated with a worsening of residential environment, nor is there a drift toward the city among lone parent migrants. A second point to note is that the temporary migration into lone parenthood actually results in more positive geographic outcomes than moves before lone parenthood, or as a lone parent. The geography of lone parent migration is not complex, but it does tend to contradict much received knowledge and informed speculation. The discussion of lone parents' migration experiences has been a particularly enlightening contribution to knowledge and one which is deserving of further attention (more specific migration-oriented attention) beyond the thesis.

10.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has complemented previous ones by examining how QoL changes through time, according to changes in a lone parent's life. By way of introduction, the quality of time-series data generated by the LPQoL questionnaire was shown to be adequate to address the research questions asked of it. Thereafter, explanations for QoL (at other times in lone parents' lives) were offered (10.3), the impact of migration (a life change) upon present-day QoL was specified (10.4.2) and lone parenthood and migration was subjected to critical review (10.4.1 & 10.4.3). What have been the key contributions to knowledge from these endeavours?

First, the chapter has shown that a life course perspective is necessary if we are to fully comprehend recent changes in lone parents' QoL. That is, it is *lone parenthood* per se that is associated with a low QoL; those present-day lone parents who were asked to evaluate their QoL when they were not lone parents expressed a significantly higher QoL compared to those who were previously lone parents. However, this association between lone parenthood and QoL does not extend into the future, i.e. those who expect to be lone parents are as likely to have a high QoL as those who expect their status to change. Such perspectives are beyond the reach of cross-sectional analysis (the basis of earlier discussion in the thesis and the tool for much QoL research). QoL research must endeavour to incorporate these elements into its research programmes. However, a key question that must be addressed is the extent to which a life course perspective is necessary for all population groups.

Second, the chapter has shown how existing theories on the relationship between migration and QoL do not have general applicability. While the migration cleavage is an important division among lone parents in terms of their QoL outlook (as for the general population), the nature of its importance is quite different. Most importantly, migration is associated with greater financial dissatisfaction. Furthermore, it was shown that the spatial scale of migration was also linked to divisions among lone parents. In contrast to the general theories, it was shown that employment-based reasons were less significant for longer migrations. These insights, together with the point made in the previous paragraph are suggestive of a lone parent dimension to migration. This contention was also explored within the chapter. However, further insights on the migration/QoL associations were made. That is the chapter demonstrated that the definition of a migrant was of critical importance in terms of the differences that emerged. Once more, this is evidence of the importance of a temporal perspective in comprehending QoL.

Third, the chapter specified the nature of the migrant population (of lone parents). While sharing much of the same features as migrants in general (younger adults being more prone to migrate), it was found that there is much that is uniquely lone parent about this aspect of their lives. In particular, it was shown how the reasons for relationship breakdown are of considerable importance in determining lone parents' propensity to migrate at the point of lone parent formation. It was also

found that it was the economically more advantaged lone parents who were more likely to migrate. Both these points undermine the rationale of Government policy toward housing and lone parents, i.e. the evidence shows that the image of the young teenager becoming pregnant in order to gain access to local authority housing is something of a red herring.

Finally, the chapter has examined migration over lone parents' life course. This analysis has answered several questions of critical importance in public policy debates. First, it has argued that there is little evidence of downward housing sector mobility among Strathclyde's lone parent population, i.e. the geography of lone parenthood owes more to differential rates of lone parent formation within areas, rather than differential rates of migration into areas of deprivation. Some evidence of shifts into areas of deprivation are evident, but these were more likely to have occurred, prior to the person becoming a lone parent. Second, a related point was that there is no drift to the city by lone parents. The city is seen to be particularly attractive to lone parents due to its central location (hence overcoming problems of accessibility). However, Strathclyde's lone parents were marginally more likely to move out of the city after becoming a lone parent. Once again, this seems to suggest that the geography of lone parenthood can be traced to differential formation in particular parts of the city. Finally, it was shown that there is a unique profile to those migrations that were undertaken to become a, or as a lone parent. The key character of these lone parent migrations were outlined. Having identified the particularity of this group of migrations and given the importance of lone parenthood in local authority housing debates, the thesis has thrown up an area worthy of detailed analysis in the near future.

However, the key point of this chapter has been the clear demonstration of the importance of the life course concept in comprehending the social world. This last comment from the substance of the thesis, should be the first comment of many more research projects in the years ahead.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

CONCLUSION

11.1 INTRODUCTION

What has the thesis contributed to knowledge? In the opening chapter (1.4.2), seven objectives were outlined which covered both theoretical and empirical issues - the substantial chapters of the thesis have dealt with each. In this concluding chapter, the objective is to bring together these insights in a single synthesis of the research. However, in the course of the thesis, additional findings have been made which pertain more directly to social policy, i.e. in addition to those which shed insight on lone parents' quality of life (hereafter QoL) and on the concept of QoL. However, care is taken not to lose sight of the logical structure of progression that is the thesis' research path. That is, this chapter does not attempt to convey how earlier insights in the thesis have contributed to subsequent lines of enquiry. As the careful sequencing of research questions was an important aspect of the thesis, it is useful to begin this conclusion by taking up where the introduction ended (1.4.3), i.e. by summarising the thesis' key findings as they were made in the course of the research.

11.2 KEY CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE OVER THE COURSE OF THE THESIS

Initially, existing knowledge of lone parenthood (chpt. 2) and QoL (chpt. 3) were reviewed. These reviews provide a broader context against which the particular objectives of the thesis can be set. However, their contribution to the thesis extends beyond this. More importantly, the reviews raised questions that shaped the research agenda. These questions were raised as concluding remarks in each chapter (2.7 and 3.4). Yet, these reviews raised more questions than the thesis could hope to answer. Thus, the reviews have also left a research agenda for other researchers to pursue. In particular, extensive research agendas were proposed for geographers with research interests in both QoL (3.2.4) and lone parenthood (2.2.5). More generally, a research agenda was outlined for the wider research community, particularly with respect to lone parenthood, i.e. 2.3.4 (demography), 2.4.4 (socio-economic issues) and 2.5.3 (lone parent family life).

The foundations of the research project were outlined in chapter four. In many research projects, this would not involve many contributions to knowledge, i.e. the emphasis would be on accounting for the research, rather than charting the contours of new approaches. However, in the thesis, this particular chapter made several important contributions to knowledge (in addition to accounting for the research that follows). Thus, a revised conceptualisation of QoL was offered (4.1.1 and 4.1.2); a first attempt to map QoL onto contemporary philosophical debate was conducted (4.1.3); the potential afforded by multi-method and multi-stage approaches were discussed (4.2); the possibility of using unorthodox sampling frames to achieve representative samples was proven to be possible (4.4.1c, d & f); a first attempt to give serious consideration to the challenges to be faced in QoL analysis in lieu of the conceptualisation of QoL was presented (4.5.1) and a bottom-up approach to multivariate analysis of QoL was offered (4.5.3c). Clearly, this context-setting chapter was much more than this; it raises many new questions for QoL researchers to ponder.

The empirical analysis commenced in chapter five. Here, it was found that while lone parents shared the same demographic profile as partnered parents, they were markedly more disadvantaged on socio-economic grounds (5.2). This conclusion applied at various geographical scales. However, the distribution of types of lone parents was not even across space. That is, different types of lone parent are found in different areas (5.3). This is indicative of the difficulties involved in classifying lone parents as a coherent social group. This was confirmed when it was shown that simple stereotypes of lone parents were not applicable (5.4). These insights were useful in comprehending the QoL results that followed.

Chapter six marked the beginning of the QoL analysis. Indeed, it was here that the most fundamental QoL issue was addressed, i.e. to what extent are lone parents' experiences of life (the internal aspect) consistent with their comparative standing against other groups (the external aspect)? The first section of the chapter demonstrated that lone parent fare less favourably

compared to other household groups (6.2.2), while the final substantive section demonstrated that lone parents perceive themselves to have an average QoL (6.4.3). While, the degrees of difference varied according to the subject of analysis at domain level, that difference exists should not be denied. This finding prepared the agenda for the remainder of the thesis, i.e. to explain why lone parents perceive a more positive QoL for themselves than would be reasonably expected and to account for the different experiences according to different domains. However, the mismatch between external and internal QoL and the evidence of variations across domains were not the only insights provided by this chapter. That is, a summary of lone parents' QoL (internal) was presented (6.4), which is of interest in its own right. Furthermore, it was shown how lone parents in Strathclyde were more deprived than lone parents in general and that there were different degrees of deprivation experienced by lone parents in different parts of Strathclyde (6.3).

The evidence of differences among the lone parent population and the (demographic) similarities with the two parent population thrust the very concept of a *lone* parent QoL into question. However, a systematic analysis of this concept in chapter seven demonstrated that it was preferable to analyse the QoL of lone parents, rather than sub-groups of lone parents (7.3) and that, while lone parents shared the same outlook on quality of life as partnered parents, their experiences were markedly dissimilar (7.4).

Armed with this knowledge, chapters eight and nine set about the task of explaining why lone parents experience the QoL that they do. Their insights were drawn according to sub-types of lone parent (chpt. 8) and aspects of QoL (chpt. 9). The former was a bivariate primer to the latter, which was based on a multivariate analysis. Chapter eight provided detailed discussion of the (implications of the) different experiences of different types of lone parent, while chapter nine was more concerned to prioritise the components according to their explanatory potential. Economic status was found to be the single most important division among lone parents, although other cleavages were also important (e.g. childcare experiences). Ultimately, however, explanations for QoL are domain specific. That is, despite the general significance of economic status, it is not of universal significance, i.e. there are instances when it is not an important division among lone parents. More generally, there are no two instances when the explanation for QoL is comparable.

Finally, chapter ten moved beyond the concern with the present-day and considered changes through time. It was shown that lone parent migration is a different entity to that undertaken by other groups; more precisely, migration was a negative life experience for lone parents. When migration was specifically examined, it was found that there is little to suggest that migration per se, contributed to the geography of lone parenthood (their concentration in cities and areas of deprivation). Rather, differential rates of lone parent formation are the more important causal factors. A different line of enquiry emphasised the importance of the subject group in comprehending QoL; while the migrant/non migrant division is as important a cleavage in terms of QoL outlook among lone parents, as it is for others, it is found that the nature of these differences is quite different. Above all, this chapter complements the earlier analysis within the thesis, by demonstrating that a life course perspective is critical in comprehending social reality.

11.3 KEY EMPIRCAL FINDINGS IN FOCUS

It is important to detail exactly what was found in terms of concrete results (the section above deals mainly with the theoretical/conceptual findings, or pays too brief an attention to the key findings). The thesis contributed to an understanding of lone parenthood in various ways, some of which have particular policy implications. These particular findings are now discussed.

The thesis provided *confirmation* of many prior hypotheses pertaining to lone parents. For example, it was shown that lone parents with more children are less satisfied with their leisure and that women lone parents were more concerned with advice & support. However, the thesis stretched far beyond this. Thus, the thesis provided evidence that *countered* many existing theories on lone parenthood. For example, it was shown that lone parents with more children were actually less concerned with transport; that single never married lone parents were more likely to be satisfied with their family life and that migrants were more satisfied with their leisure opportunities. Not only were these new insights reported, explanations were provided for each. *New insights* were also provided that were not counter intuitive. For example, it was found that the less educated were less concerned with transport; that those whose family provided more childcare support were less concerned with what other people thought of them and that single never married lone parents were more satisfied with the control they had over their lives. Such insights encouraged a new way of regarding lone parents that otherwise may not have taken place; in each case explanations were provided.

The contributions to knowledge extended to the geography of lone parenthood. It was shown how different types of lone parent are found in different geographical areas and that the distribution of QoL (external) varied quite dramatically according to area of residence. In addition, the internal QoL analysis demonstrated time and time again that lone parents' outlook on QoL and their experience of life varied according to their place of residence. For example, the presumed advantages of city living did not materialise; indeed, in key areas, lone parents from outside the city were found to experience a better QoL (as was the case with opportunities to better oneself). As well as an explanation for QoL, one geographical context was examined, i.e. the neighbourhood. A key discovery was that male lone parents were markedly more dissatisfied with this arena of their life. Further examination showed this to be related to life course changes, i.e. the changes in family status, caused a reappraisal of the lone fathers local area, in which their 'place' was found to be far less satisfactory (than before).

Not only were the findings of interest, many are particularly relevant to contemporary social policy debate. Four key policy relevant findings should be observed. First, and supporting Government (intended) policy, it was found that lone parents who lived with others had a higher QoL; this finding is of use in the current debate regarding lone parents' access to local authority housing. Second, it was found that migrants were a group of lone parents who expressed a particular need of support (but who are not yet targeted by lone parent support groups and other social service agencies);

greater thought needs to be given as to how the support needs of this group of lone parents can be met. Third, there was unequivocal evidence that lone parents want to work (even more than partnered parents) but that they currently suffer from a lack of work; indeed, not working was most associated with a low QoL for lone parents. While this is a sad reflection on lone parents' current condition, it is a hopeful sign for the future should thought be given to how lone parents can be encouraged into the labour market (and off welfare benefits). Lone parents will be receptive to such incentives; the policy makers challenge is to devise effective means of enabling lone parents work aspirations. Finally, related to this point, the importance of childcare as a means to facilitate lone parents' labour market ambitions was found to be absolutely essential. This insight is being increasingly recognised by those concerned with lone parenthood in Britain. However, by reaching this conclusion in a research project that did not focus on this issue specifically, the reality of this point is emphasised all the more.

Thus, the thesis has contributed to knowledge in theoretical and empirical terms. Some of the key insights have confirmed existing knowledge, but the vast majority have led to a reappraisal of lone parenthood and fresh insights into their conditions. However, in breaking new ground many more issues were drawn attention to that could be answered within the project. It is hoped that the single most important contribution of this thesis is therefore a legacy of subsequent research by geographers and other researchers in the years ahead.

Abbreviations

2.P.Q.o.L.	Two Parent Quality Of Life
A.P.T.	Areas For Priority Treatment (S.R.C.)
chpt.	chapter
D.C.	District Council
D.S.S.	Department of Social Security (UK Govt.)
E.S.R.C.	Economic and Social Research Council
F.E.S.	Family Expenditure Survey
F.P.S.C.	Family Policy Studies Centre
G.H.S.	General Household Survey (O.P.C.S.)
I.B.G.	Institute Of British Geographers
L.F.S.	Labour Force Survey
L.P.Q.o.L	Lone Parent Quality of Life (questionnaire
O.P.C.S.	Office of Population Census and Surveys (UK Govt. - Civil Service)
O.S.	Ordnance Survey
Q.o.L.	Quality of Life
S.C.B.O.E.	Social Class Based on Employment
S.C.P.R.	Social and Community Planning Research
S.C.G.S.G.	Social and Cultural Geography Study Group (of the I.B.G.)
S.E.G.	Socio-Economic Group
S.P.S.S.-X	Statistical Package For The Social Sciences (McGraw-Hill)
S.R.C.	Strathclyde Regional Council

Appendix 1

Quality Of Life Interview Schedule

SECTION 1 : YOUR LIFE AS A WHOLE

1. List the good points and bad points of your life as it is today.
2. Explain what effect each of the points you have listed in Question 1 has upon your life.
3. Of the points you have listed in Question 1, which have the greatest impact on your life?
4. Overall, how happy are you with your life as it is today?
5. Compare your life with - your friends / other single parents / other families in your neighbourhood / the average family.

   What do you feel is better, worse and similar about your life when compared to these groups?

SECTION 2 : SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF YOUR LIFE

6a. In your opinion, what are the good and bad points of living in your house/flat?

For each point you have listed, EXPLAIN THE EFFECT this has on your/your children's lives?

6b. In your opinion, what are the good and bad points of living in your neighbourhood?

For each point you have listed, EXPLAIN THE EFFECT this has on your/your children's lives?

6c. In what ways do your friends and family play a part in your/your children's lives?

For each way you have listed, EXPLAIN THE EFFECT this has on your/your children's lives?

6d. Give details of your 'committments.' - paid/unpaid employment / voluntary work / upkeep of house/flat / parental responsibilities

For each committment you have, EXPLAIN WHAT EFFECT this has on your/your children's life?

6e. Give details of what you do in your 'spare-time'.

For each spare-time activity you have, EXPLAIN WHAT EFFECT this has upon your life.

Personal Welfare refers to basic necessities (health, clothing and food-intake) and to educational/training opportunities.

6f. What aspects of your/your children's personal welfare are you satisfied or unsatisfied with in your life?

For each point you have listed, EXPLAIN THE EFFECT this has on your/your children's lives?

SECTION 3 : LIFE HISTORY

7. List and describe the major changes in your life.
8. In what ways did becoming a single parent affect your life?
9. How has your life as a single parent changed through time?
10. How did these changes come about?

SECTION 4 : FUTURE GOALS IN YOUR LIFE

11. Outline the goals you have in life.
12. What can be done to help you attain these goals? - By yourself / By others
13. What obstacles do you feel may prevent you from attaining these goals.
14. Do you think you will ever attain these goals? Explain.

Appendix 2
Diary Day/Week Extracts
(70% reduction)

ACTIVITIES	DURATION	WHERE	WITH WHOM	REMARKS
SAT - MORNING				
SAT - AFT'Nn				
SAT - EVENING				
SATURDAY - SUMMARY				
SUN - MORNING				
SUN - AFT'Nn				
SUN - EVENING				
SUNDAY - SUMMARY				

PART 2 : DIARY DAY

Follow these guidelines for your Diary Day which is :

.....

1) The diary day should be completed in more detail than the weekly activity list. For example,

   - in the weekly activity section you may record for an evening "AT HOME WITH SON."
   - in the diary day section you would explain everything that this included (dinner/play/ watching TV/who else came to see you etc etc)

2) Record in your diary each time you undertake a new activity (e.g. ironing or going to the shop or playing with child etc etc)

3) For each activity you start, record the following ...

   - the **TIME** you began this.
   - **WHAT ELSE** you done at this time
     : often we do two things at once e.g. eating dinner while watching TV or taking our child to the swings while getting the messages. Record extra activity in this column.
   - **WHERE** it occured
   - **WITH WHOM** it occured
   - **REMARKS**
     : i.e. Use this space to
     - explain the activity in more detail
     - note how you feel about this

   Record this additional information in the appropriate column

4) Complete your diary at regular intervals during the day (every 2-3 hours). If you take longer between writing up you may forget everything that was done / how you felt etc

5) If you run out of room (this may happen with 'What else you Done') continue on the box below. Take a new line for your next activity.

An extract from a completed diary-day is given overleaf

ACTIVITIES	DURATION	WHERE	WITH WHOM	REMARKS
WED - EVENING				
At home with kids	*4hr*	*Home*	*Kids*	*Mum drops kids off / make dinner / play / TV / bed.*
WEDNESDAY - SUMMARY				
Nothing special usually happens!				
THUR -MORNING				
Get ready for work and get kids ready for school.	*1½hr*	*Home*	*Kids*	*Usually short of time! Neighbour takes kids to school for me.*
THUR -AFT'Nn				
Work	*2½hr*	*Jeannies Tearoom Main Street*	*Jean (owner) + Kelly*	*p/t job. Breaks up day from housework. Cash handy too.*
THUR -EVENING				
As Wed. evening.				
THURSDAY - SUMMARY				
Job in afternoon gives me something to look forward to.				
FRI - MORNING				
As Thur. morn + Housework	*1½* / *2½*	*Home*	*Kids* / *-*	*As Friday afternoon*
FRI - AFT'Nn				
Housework	*3hr*	*Home*	*-*	*Get chores out of way before the weekend.*
Messages	*1hr*	*Supermarket Main St.*	*Betty (Neighbour)*	
FRI - EVENING				
As Wed even at Darts Team	*4hr*	*Black Horse Lounge, West St.*	*Rest of Team (4 in all)*	*Every 2 weeks we play in our local league.*
FRIDAY - SUMMARY				
Long Day! Mum babysits every 2nd week so I can have a game of darts / night out.				

PRIMARY ACTIVITY	TIME BEGAN	WHAT ELSE DID YOU DO	WHERE	WITH WHOM	REMARKS

Appendix 3

Lone Parent Quality Of Life Questionnaire (Pilot)

(70% reduction)

GLASGOW UNIVERSITY
GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT

Lone Parent Survey 1991

If you are unable or unwilling to answer any question, leave it blank.

PART 1 : ABOUT YOURSELF Please CIRCLE THE ANSWERS that describe you and fill in the blanks where required.

1. AGE - teenager 20-24 (25-29) 30-34 35-39 40-44 45-49 over 49
2. SEX - male (female)
3. STATUS - divorced widowed separated never married/co-habited Other SINGLE
4. ETHNIC GROUP - (White) Indian Pakistani Chinese Other _____
5. LENGTH OF TIME AS A SINGLE PARENT - 2 years _____ months
6. AGES OF ALL YOUR CHILDREN - 2yrs _____ _____ _____
7. EMPLOYMENT - Are you? a) in paid employment b) in voluntary employment (c) out of work
8. ABOUT 'WORK' - a) What do you do _____
   b) How many hours per week do you work _____
   c) How many days per week do you work _____
   d) Is your job ? permanent temporary casual
9. EDUCATION - a) What age did you leave school at? 15 16 (17) 18 19
   b) Give details of any post-school education
   _____ course at _____
   _____ course at _____
10. HOUSING - (Owner-Occupier) Council House Housing Association Private Rented Housing Co-op Other (specify) _____

11. TRANSPORT CIRCLE THE NUMBER that indicates what form of transport you would use to each of the following

	WALKING	BICYCLE	MOTOR-CYCLE	TRAIN	UNDERGROUND	BUS	OWN CAR	FRIENDS/RELATIVES CAR	
a) to go shopping for messages -	(1)	2	3	4	5	6	7	(8)	Other _____
b) to go shopping for clothes -	(1)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Other _____

12. INCOME - a) What is your main source of income? INCOME SUPPORT
   - b) Do you receive : maintenance from your ex-partner ? (no) yes £____ per/week
   : Income Support no (yes)
   : Family Credit (no) yes
   : One Parent Benefit no (yes)
   - d) Would you reveal the whereabouts of your ex-partner (no) (I couldn't)
   to the D.S.S. in order to receive maintenance? (no) (I wouldn't) I COULDN'T
   yes

13. POSTCODE OF YOUR HOME - PA1 1XU _____ _____ _____

14. CHILDCARE CIRCLE THE NUMBERS that indicate what form of childcare you use

	MOTHER/MOTHER-IN-LAW	OTHER RELATIVE	FRIEND/NEIGHBOUR	OTHER PARENT	CURRENT PARTNER	OLDER AFTER YOUNGER	CHILD MINDER	COUNCIL NURSERY	PRIVATE NURSERY
a) your main form of childcare (tick one)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	(8)	9
b) all other forms of childcare that you use	(1)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

PART 2 : LIFE PICTURE-PRESENT TIME

PLEASE CIRCLE THE NUMBER that indicates how important each factor is to you. The higher the number, the more important it is in influencing the quality of your life

HOW IMPORTANT ...	NOT IMPORTANT	OF LIMITED IMPORTANCE	QUITE IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
1. The housing conditions you live in	1	2	3	4	(5)
2. Your street as a place to live	1	2	3	(4)	5
3. That you are safe from crime	1	2	3	4	(5)
4. How other people treat you	1	2	(3)	4	5
5. Your family life	1	2	3	4	(5)
6. Your state of health	1	2	3	4	(5)
7. Your financial situation	1	2	3	4	(5)
8. That you are satisfied with your work	1	2	3	4	5
9. That you have the opportunity to "better yourself"	1	2	(3)	4	5
10. You are able to control your own life	1	2	3	4	(5)
11. You get opportunities for leisure/recreation	1	2	3	(4)	5
12. That adequate transportation is available to you	1	2	(3)	4	5
13. That advice and support are available to you	1	2	3	(4)	5
14. That the services you need are available locally	1	2	3	4	(5)

15. Do you belong to any one-parent groups ? CIRCLE EITHER 1 or 2 or 3

1. YES the GINGERBREAD (go to Q16a)
2. NO I have never been to one (go to Q16b)
3. NO but I did go before (go to Q16b)

16. Place CIRCLE THE NUMBERS beside all the reasons why you ...

a) Why do you attend your one-parent group?

1 for Professional councilling
(2) for useful information
(3) to share experiences with others
(4) make friends
(5) social life
(6) for new interests
(7) to enhance personal skills
Other _____

b) Why don't attend a one-parent group?

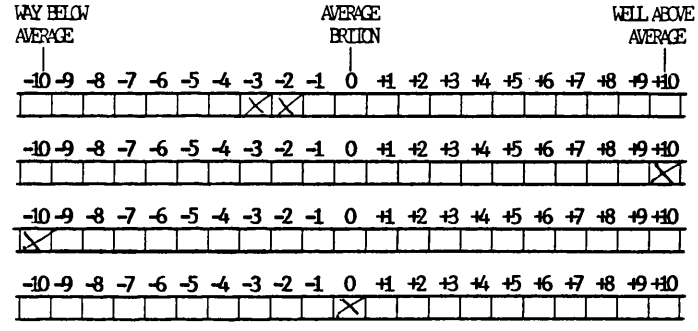
1 don't need group support
2 I'm not like the other members
3 don't have the time
4 meeting times don't suit me
5 don't know of any such group
6 receive similar support from another group (.....)
Other _____

Please indicate how satisfied you are with the following aspects of your life. Numbers to the left of 0 indicate increasing dissatisfaction and numbers to the right indicate increasing satisfaction. PLEASE CIRCLE THE NUMBER that indicates your level of satisfaction.

	EXTREMELY DISSATISFIED	VERY DISSATISFIED	QUITE DISSATISFIED	NEITHER SATISFIED NOR DISSATISFIED	QUITE SATISFIED	VERY SATISFIED	EXTREMELY SATISFIED
17. The size of your house/flat	-3	-2	(-1)	0	+1	+2	+3
18. The physical condition of your house/flat	-3	-2	-1	0	(+1)	+2	+3
19. The relationship you have with your neighbours	-3	-2	-1	0	(+1)	+2	+3
20. Community spirit in your area	-3	-2	(-1)	0	+1	+2	+3
21. The level of vandalism in your area	-3	-2	(-1)	0	+1	+2	+3
22. Your safety in your own home	-3	-2	(-1)	0	+1	+2	+3
23. How people treat single parents	-3	-2	(-1)	0	+1	+2	+3
24. Social status of the area in which you live	-3	-2	-1	(0)	+1	+2	+3
25. Relationship you have with your ex-partner	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
26. Relationship you have with your family	-3	-2	-1	(0)	+1	+2	+3
27. Service provided by your Doctor	-3	-2	-1	(0)	+1	+2	+3
28. Your neighbourhood as a healthy place to live in	-3	-2	(-1)	0	+1	+2	+3
29. Running costs of your home	(-3)	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
30. Level of financial support from the D.S.S.	(-3)	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
31. (if in employment) Conditions of your employment	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
(if unemployed) Your employment prospects.	(-3)	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
32. Provision of local childcare facilities	(-3)	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
33. What the National Government are doing for you	(-3)	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
34. Provision of shops in your area	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	(+2)	+3
35. Amenity provision in your area (local hall, swings)	(-3)	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
36. Local provision of sports and leisure facilities	-3	-2	-1	0	(+1)	+2	+3
37. Amount of spare-time you have to yourself	-3	-2	-1	0	(+1)	+2	+3
38. Frequency of public transport provision	-3	-2	-1	0	(+1)	+2	+3
39. Cost of public transport	(-3)	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

PART 3 : YOUR OPINIONS

Please give your opinion on the QUALITY OF YOUR LIFE. The quality of life for the "average Briton" has been given a value of 0. Numbers to the left of 0 would indicate that you are increasingly below average and numbers to the right of 0 would indicate that you are increasingly above average. Please place a cross in the appropriate box for the following...



CIRCLE THE NUMBER that indicates how important each of the following are to the quality of your life.

	NOT IMPORTANT	OF LIMITED IMPORTANCE	QUITE IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
5. LOCAL MATTERS (e.g. tidiness and level of vandalism in your street)	1	2	3	4	(5)
6. TOWN IN WHICH YOU LIVE (e.g. availability of safe public areas and parks)	1	2	3	4	(5)
7. REGIONAL ISSUES (e.g. access to open spaces within Strathclyde and the crime rate in the West of Scotland)	1	2	3	4	(5)
8. NATIONAL ISSUES (e.g. protection of areas like the "Highlands" of Scotland and the level of violence in Britain today)	1	2	3	4	(5)
9. GLOBAL ISSUES (e.g. pollution to the Ozone layer and the threat of world war)	1	2	3	4	(5)

Please compare yourself with other people. CIRCLE THE NUMBER which says how you compare against the average person for the following five roles.

		WAY BELOW AVERAGE			AVERAGE			WAY ABOVE AVERAGE	NOT APPLICABLE
10. as a PARENT	are you...	1	2	3	(4)	5	6	7	
11. as a FRIEND	are you...	1	2	3	(4)	5	6	7	
12. as a MONEY MANAGER	are you...	1	2	3	(4)	5	6	7	
13. as a FIT/HEALTHY PERSON	are you...	1	2	3	(4)	5	6	7	
14. as a HOUSEKEEPER	are you...	1	2	3	(4)	5	6	7	

Using the same scale as above, compare yourself to the average person if either of these apply to you.

15. as a EMPLOYEE/VOLUNTARY WORKER	are you...	1	2	3	4	(5)	6	7	N/A
16. as a PARTNER	are you...	1	2	3	4	(5)	6	7	N/A

17. Do you think of yourself as a single parent ? 1. (YES) 2. NO

If not, how would you describe yourself?

_____

_____

PART 4 : LIFE PICTURE-YOUR PAST

1. Please give details of your housing situation before you became a single parent by completing the table below. If you have moved more than three times, list the three most recent moves. Please complete all four columns for each move.

WHERE you stayed (street and town)	DATE you left (year)	WHO you shared with (e.g. parents, spouse)	REASON for moving
GLASGOW RD, PARSEY	1986	PARENTS	OUTGROWN THE FAMILY NEST

2. Have you moved house since becoming a single parent?
   1. (NO) (go to Q)
   2. YES (please complete the table below for the first two moves you made)

WHERE you stayed (street and town)	DATE you left (year)	WHO you shared with (e.g. parents, spouse)	REASON for moving

3. When you registered the birth of your child(children) were they?...
CIRCLE THE NUMBER that applies to you.

1. **Registered in both your and your partners name.**
2. **Registered in your name only.**
3. **Registered in your partners name only.**

What were the reasons for you and your partner splitting up? PLEASE CIRCLE those that apply.

	NO REASON IN PARTICULAR	VIOLENCE	DID NOT GET ON ANYMORE	MONEY / FINANCIAL PROBLEMS	ALCOHOL / DRUGS / ADDICTION	FOUND SOMEONE ELSE / ADULTERY	LACK OF COMMUNICATION / DID NOT TALK	PARTNER RAN OFF / DID NOT WANT A FAMILY	PARTNER DID NOT GIVE ENOUGH TIME TO FAMILY	
4. a) the most important reason (CIRCLE ONE ONLY)	(1)	2	3	4	5	(6)	7	8	9	Other_____
b) all other reasons (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Other_____

5. What has been the most serious financial problem that you have had to face as a single parent?
PLEASE GIVE DETAILS

MORTGAGE DEBT ALMOST FACED RE-POSSESSION!

How did you cope with this problem? Please indicate how important each of the following ten solutions were in helping you to come to terms with this problem?

	NOT IMPORTANT	OF LIMITED IMPORTANCE	QUITE IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
Adjusted budget to accomodate problem	1	2	3	4	(5)
Took things one day at a time	1	2	3	4	(5)
Sought advice from friends and family	1	2	(3)	4	5
Sought advice from experts who could help me	1	2	(3)	4	5
Worked out what went wrong by myself	1	2	3	4	(5)
Dealt with the source of the problem	1	2	(3)	4	5
Tried to see the positive side of the situation	1	2	3	(4)	5
Became upset, then calmed down to deal with problem	1	2	3	(4)	5
Pretended it never happened	(1)	2	3	4	5
Put off the problem to a later date	1	2	3	(4)	5

----------THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE----------

****

QUESTIONS

Should you have any questions you would like to ask, do not hesitate to contact me (John McKendrick) at ...

Dept. of Geography,
Univ. of Glasgow,
G12 8QQ.
or
Tel. (041)-339-8855 ext.6653 (daytime/weekdays)
(0294) 602621 (evenings/weekends)

****

THE RESEARCH PROJECT

As you know you are contributing towards a study of the Quality of Life for single-parent families in Urban Scotland.

Your contribution will be added to others and the results compiled for single-parents AS A GROUP. No one will have access to any information you have volunteered; nor shall any use of tne information you supply be accredited to you in publication. COMPLETE CONFIDENTIALITY IS ASSURED.

It is hoped that a short summary of the results will be available in the Autumn of 1992. If you are interested in these I shall supply these when they are available. Please tick below if you are interested.

I would like a copy of the results when they are available _____

I am interested in the results of the research and would like to participate in a discussion about them when tney are available. _____

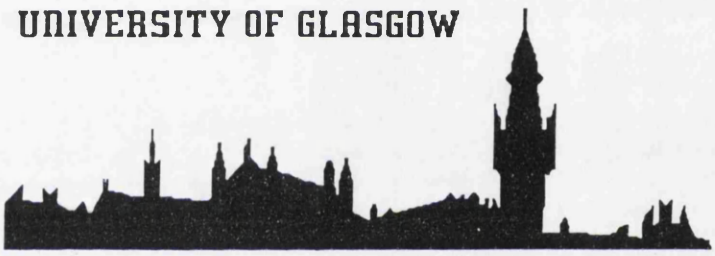
Once again may I thank you for your support in making this research possible.

John H. McKendrick
Univ. of Glasgow.

Appendix 4

Lone Parent Quality Of Life Questionnaire (Main)

(70% reduction)



GLASGOW UNIVERSITY
GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT

Lone Parent Survey 1991

If you are unable or unwilling to answer any question, leave it blank.

PART 1 : ABOUT YOURSELF Please CIRCLE THE ANSWERS that describe you and fill in the blanks where required.

1. AGE - **teenager** **20-24** **25-29** **30-34** **35-39** **40-44** **45-49** **over 49**
2. SEX - **male** **female**
3. STATUS - **divorced** **widowed** **separated** **never married** **Other**_____
4. ETHNIC GROUP - **White** **Indian** **Pakistani** **Chinese** **Other**_____
5. LENGTH OF TIME AS A SINGLE PARENT - _____ **years** _____ **months**
6. AGES OF ALL YOUR CHILDREN - ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
7. EMPLOYMENT - are you? **in paid employment** **in voluntary employment** **out of work** (go to Q9) **full time student** (go to Q9)
8. ABOUT 'WORK' - a) What do you do? _____
   b) Who is your employer? _____
   c) How many hours per week do you work? _____
   d) How many days per week do you work? _____
   e) Is your job ? **permanent** **temporary** **casual**
9. INCOME - a) What is your MAIN source of income? **Social security** **Wages** **Maintenance** **Student Grant** **Other**_____

   WIDOWS/WIDOWERS PLEASE GO TO Q9f

   b) Do you receive maintenance from your ex-partner ? **no** **yes £**____ **per/week**
   c) Would you reveal the whereabouts of your ex-partner to the D.S.S. in order to receive maintenance? **yes** **no (I couldn't)** **no (I wouldn't)**
   d) Have you been called to the D.S.S. for an interview about maintenance payments **no (go to Q9f)** **yes**
   e) What was the outcome of this interview? _____

   _____

   NON-WIDOWED PLEASE GO TO Q10

   f) Did you receive an insurance payment after your partners death? **no** **yes**
10. EDUCATION - a) At what age did you leave school ? **15** **16** **17** **18** **19**
    b) Give details of any post-school education in table below

YEAR(s)	COURSE	WHERE	QUALIFICATION (if any)

11. HOUSING - a) Are you the sole occupant of your house/flat? **yes** (go to Q10c) **no**
    b) Who do you share with? _____
    c) Is the house/flat you are living in? **Owner-Occupied** **Council House** **Housing Co-op** **Private Rented** **Housing Association** **Other** (specify)_____

12. TRANSPORT CIRCLE THE NUMBER that indicates what form of transport you would use for EACH of the following

	BUS	TRAIN	UNDERGROUND	BICYCLE	MOTOR-CYCLE	WALKING	OWN CAR	FRIENDS/RELATIVES CAR	
a) to go shopping for the messages -	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Other_____
b) to go shopping for clothes -	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Other_____

13. CHILDCARE CIRCLE THE NUMBERS that indicate what form of childcare you currently use

	MOTHER/MOTHER IN LAW	OTHER RELATIVE	FRIEND/NEIGHBOUR	OTHER PARENT	CURRENT PARTNER	OLDER AFTER YOUNGER	CHILD MINDER	COUNCIL NURSERY	PRIVATE NURSERY		NONE
a) your MAIN form of childcare (TICK ONE)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Other_____	10
b) all other forms of childcare that you use	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Other_____	10

14. POSTCODE OF YOUR HOME - ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____

PART 2 : LIFE PICTURE-PRESENT TIME

PLEASE CIRCLE THE NUMBER that indicates how important each factor is TO YOU. The higher the number, the more important it is in influencing the quality of YOUR life

HOW IMPORTANT ...	NOT IMPORTANT	OF LIMITED IMPORTANCE	QUITE IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
1. The housing conditions you live in	1	2	3	4	5
2. The street that you live in	1	2	3	4	5
3. That you are safe from crime	1	2	3	4	5
4. Your family life	1	2	3	4	5
5. Your state of health	1	2	3	4	5
6. Your financial situation	1	2	3	4	5
7. That you are satisfied with the work that you do	1	2	3	4	5
8. You get opportunities for leisure/recreation	1	2	3	4	5
9. That adequate transportation is available to you	1	2	3	4	5
10. That the services you need are available locally	1	2	3	4	5
11. That advice and support are available to you	1	2	3	4	5
12. What other people think of you	1	2	3	4	5
13. That you have the opportunity to "better yourself"	1	2	3	4	5
14. You are able to control your own life	1	2	3	4	5

15. Do you belong to any one-parent groups ? CIRCLE ONE ANSWER AND COMPLETE BLANKS IF REQUIRED

a) YES One-Plus at _____ (go to Q16a)
b) YES Gingerbread at _____ (go to Q16a)
c) YES the _____ (go to Q16a)
d) NO I have never been to one (go to Q16b)
e) NO but I did go before (go to Q16b)

16. CIRCLE THE NUMBERS beside all the reasons why you ...

a) Why do you attend your one-parent group?
1 for Professional counselling
2 for useful information
3 to share experiences with others
4 make friends
5 social life
6 for new interests
7 to enhance personal skills
8 for the benefit of my children
Other _____

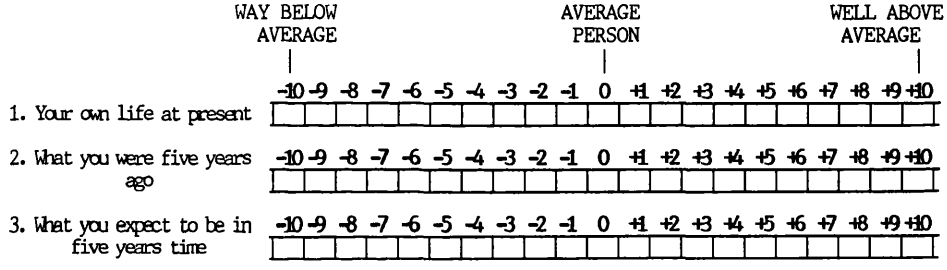
b) Why don't you attend a one-parent group?
1 don't need group support
2 I'm not like the other members
3 don't have the time
4 meeting times don't suit me
5 don't know of any such group
6 receive support from another group (name of group .....)
Other _____

Please indicate how satisfied you are with the following aspects of YOUR life. PLEASE CIRCLE THE NUMBER that indicates YOUR LEVEL of satisfaction.

	VERY DISSATISFIED			MIXED FEELINGS			VERY SATISFIED	DON'T KNOW
17. The physical condition of your house/flat	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
18. The general appearance of housing in your area	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
19. The relationship you have with your neighbours	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
20. Community spirit in your area	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
21. Your safety in your own home	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
22. The level of vandalism in your area	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
23. The relationship you have with your children	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
24. Support provided by your family who live locally	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
25. Service provided by your Doctor	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
26. That your neighbourhood is a healthy place to live in	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
27. Level of financial support from the D.S.S.	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
28. Running costs of your home	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
29. (if in employment) The conditions of your employment	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
(if unemployed) Your employment prospects	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
30. (if in employment) The time it takes you to travel to work	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
(if unemployed) Employment training in your area	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
31. Amount of spare-time you have to yourself	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
32. Local provision of sports and leisure facilities	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
33. The public transport service	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
34. Pedestrian safety in your area	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
35. The services your local authorities provide for you	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
36. Provision of shops in your area	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
37. That the support of others helps you overcome loneliness	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
38. The range of community groups in your area	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
39. The way people treat single parents	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
40. The reputation of your area	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
41. What the National Government are doing for you	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
42. Provision of local childcare facilities	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
43. That you alone must make all the family decisions	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
44. The amount of influence you have on what goes on in your area	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X

PART 3 : YOUR OPINIONS

Compare yourself to the average person. The quality of life for the "average person" has been given a value of 0. Numbers to the LEFT OF 0 would indicate that your position is below average and numbers to the RIGHT OF 0 would indicate that your position is above average. Please place a cross in the appropriate box for the following times in your life...



CIRCLE THE NUMBER that indicates how important each of the following are to YOU	NOT IMPORTANT	OF LIMITED IMPORTANCE	QUITE IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
5. LOCAL MATTERS (e.g. tidiness of your street and level of vandalism in your neighbourhood)	1	2	3	4	5
6. TOWN IN WHICH YOU LIVE (e.g. availability of parks and safety in public areas)	1	2	3	4	5
7. REGIONAL ISSUES (e.g. access to open countryside within Strathclyde and the crime rate in the West of Scotland)	1	2	3	4	5
8. NATIONAL ISSUES (e.g. protection of areas like the "Highlands" of Scotland and the level of violence in Britain today)	1	2	3	4	5
9. GLOBAL ISSUES (e.g. pollution to the Ozone layer and the threat of war)	1	2	3	4	5

Please compare yourself with other people. CIRCLE THE NUMBER which says how you compare against the average person for the following life roles.

		WAY BELOW AVERAGE			AVERAGE			WAY ABOVE AVERAGE	NOT APPLICABLE
10. as a PARENT	are you...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
11. as a FRIEND	are you...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
12. as a MONEY MANAGER	are you...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
13. as a HOUSEKEEPER	are you...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
14. as a FIT/HEALTHY PERSON	are you...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
15. as a EMPLOYEE/VOLUNTARY WORKER/STUDENT	are you...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
16. as a PARTNER	were you...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

17. a) Do you think of yourself as a single parent ? **YES** (go to Q18) **NO** (go to part b)

    b) How would you describe yourself? _____

_____

18. What is your attitude toward future partners?
    CIRCLE THE LETTER that applies to you.

    a) **Don't ever want another partner again**
    b) **Would like a steady relationship with a partner in the distant future**
    c) **Would like a steady relationship with a partner in the near future**
    d) **Currently have a steady relationship with another partner**
    e) **DON'T KNOW**

PART 4 : LIFE PICTURE-YOUR PAST

1. When you registered the birth of your child(children) were they?...
   CIRCLE THE LETTER that applies to you.

   a) Registered in both your and your partners name.
   b) Registered in your name only.
   c) Registered in your partners name only.

   WIDOWS/WIDOWERS PLEASE GO TO Q4

2. Did you live with your partner before you split up? **no** **yes for ____ years**
3. Did YOU move house when you split up with your partner? **no** **yes**
4. Have you moved house in the last 20 years?
   1. **NO** (go to Q5)
   2. **YES** (please complete the table on the next page for the last four moves you made)

	WHERE you stayed (street and town)	DATE you left (year)	WHO you shared with (e.g. parents, spouse)	REASON for moving
PREVIOUS ADDRESS 1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

WIDOWS/WIDOWERS PLEASE GO TO Q6

5. What were the reasons for you and your partner splitting up? PLEASE CIRCLE those that apply.

	MONEY / FINANCIAL PROBLEMS	ALCOHOL / DRUGS / ADDICTION	LACK OF COMMUNICATION / DID NOT TALK	FOUND SOMEONE ELSE / ADULTERY	DID NOT GET ON ANYMORE	VIOLENCE	PARTNER DID NOT GIVE ENOUGH TIME TO FAMILY	PARTNER RAN OFF / DID NOT WANT A FAMILY	NO REASON IN PARTICULAR	
a) the most important reason (CIRCLE ONE ONLY)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Other_____
b) all other reasons (circle all that apply)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Other_____

6. a) What has been THE MOST SERIOUS financial problem that you have had to face as a single parent?
PLEASE GIVE DETAILS _____

_____

How did you cope with this problem? Please indicate how important each of the following ten solutions were in helping you to come to terms with this problem?	NOT IMPORTANT	OF LIMITED IMPORTANCE	QUITE IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
b) Adjusted budget to accommodate problem	1	2	3	4	5
c) Took things one day at a time	1	2	3	4	5
d) Sought advice from friends and family	1	2	3	4	5
e) Sought advice from experts who could help me	1	2	3	4	5
f) Worked out what went wrong by myself	1	2	3	4	5
g) Dealt with the source of the problem	1	2	3	4	5
h) Tried to see the positive side of the situation	1	2	3	4	5
i) Became upset, then calmed down to deal with problem	1	2	3	4	5
j) Pretended it never happened	1	2	3	4	5
k) Put off the problem to a later date	1	2	3	4	5

----------THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE----------

LAST QUESTION !!

- Where did you collect your questionnaire from ? _____

****

QUESTIONS

Should you have any questions you would like to ask, do not hesitate to contact me (John McKendrick) at ...

Department of Geography,
University of Glasgow,
G12 8QQ.
or
Tel. (041)-339-8855 ext.6653 (daytime/weekdays)
(0294) 602621 (evenings/weekends)

****

THE RESEARCH PROJECT

As you know you are contributing towards a study of the Quality of Life for single-parent families in Strathclyde region.

Your contribution will be added to others and the results compiled for single-parents AS A GROUP. No one will have access to any information you have volunteered; nor shall any use of the information you supply be accredited to you in publication. COMPLETE CONFIDENTIALITY IS ASSURED.

It is hoped that a short summary of the results will be available in the Autumn of 1992. A copy of these shall be displayed at the place where you collected your questionnaire (or will be sent to your lone parent group) if you would like to see them. Please tick below if you are interested.

I would like to see a copy of the results _____

You may wish to participate further in this research. There are three further stages. Place a tick besides those stages you would like more information on. I will send you more details early in 1992.

- Keeping a diary for a short time _____
- Personal Interview about life as a single parent _____
- Group discussions about the results _____

CONTACT POINT : _____
_____
_____

Whether you wish to participate further or not, may I thank you for finding the time to complete this questionnaire.

John H. McKendrick
University of Glasgow.

Appendix 5
Lone Parent Quality Of Life Questionnaire (Control)
(70% reduction)

PART 1 : YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE

PLEASE CIRCLE THE NUMBER that indicates how satisfied you are with each aspect of your life.

HOW SATISFIED are you with ...

	VERY DISSATISFIED			MIXED FEELINGS		VERY SATISFIED	DON'T KNOW/DOESN'T APPLY
1. The house that you live in	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
2. The street that you live in	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
3. Your family life	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
4. Your state of health	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
5. Your financial situation	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
6. Your safety from crime	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
7. The advice and support you receive from others	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
8. The work that you do	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
9. The opportunities you get for leisure/recreation	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
10. The transportation that is available to you	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
11. Local service provision	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
12. Other people's opinion of you	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
13. The opportunities you have to "better yourself"	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
14. The amount of control you have over your own life	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X

PART 2 : FAMILY LIFE Please CIRCLE THE ANSWERS that best describe you and fill in the blanks where required.

** Parts d, e & f of QUESTION 15 do not apply to lone parents who have never lived with their partner **

15. COMPARE YOUR LONE PARENT FAMILY TO WHAT YOU WERE IN BEFORE - HOW DO YOU FEEL ?

a : With the rest of your family - **less close** **same as before** **closer to them** **not applicable**

b : With your ex-partner's family - **less close** **same as before** **closer to them** **not applicable**

c : Are you - **less happy** **same as before** **more happy** **not applicable**

d : Are your children - **less happy** **same as before** **more happy** **not applicable**

e : As a parent, are you - **worse than before** **same as before** **better than before** **not applicable**

f : With your children, are you - **less close** **same as before** **closer to them** **not applicable**

16. WHO DECIDED TO SEPARATE? - **you** **your ex-partner** **both of you** **was only a short relationship**

17. WHO'S FAULT WAS IT FOR THE SEPARATION? - **yours** **your ex-partner** **both of you** **nobody's fault**

18. a : ARE ALL LONE PARENT'S EQUALLY DESERVING OF PUBLIC SUPPORT? - **yes** (go to Q23) **no** (go to Q22b)

b : WHICH TYPES DESERVE THE MOST HELP? - _____

c : WHICH TYPES DESERVE THE LEAST HELP? - _____

---------- PLEASE TURN OVER ----------

** QUESTIONS 19 & 20 do not apply to Widows **

19. HOW OFTEN DOES YOUR EX-PARTNER KEEP IN CONTACT WITH THE CHILDREN? -

more than once a week once a week once a fortnight once a month

less than once a month never irregularly Other _____

20. IS THIS FREQUENCY OF CONTACT ... ? - not enough about right too much

21. HAVE YOU HAD ANY BETTER RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PARTNERS .....

a) Before you were with your children's other parent ? - yes no

b) Since becoming a lone parent ? - yes no

PART 3 : SOURCES OF SUPPORT Listed below are six problems that could happen to anyone. For each 'problem', list;

- WHO you would first turn to for help
- HOW LONG it would take you to travel to this source of help.

... and repeat for who you would next turn to for help.

	FIRST SOURCE OF HELP	TRAVEL TIME	SECOND SOURCE	TRAVEL TIME
22. Household Jobs (e.g. moving furniture)	_____	_____	_____	_____
23. When you are ill	_____	_____	_____	_____
24. Borrowing money	_____	_____	_____	_____
25. Feeling depressed	_____	_____	_____	_____
26. Problems with children	_____	_____	_____	_____
27. Problems with spouse/partner	_____	_____	_____	_____

PART 4 : ABOUT YOURSELF Please CIRCLE THE ANSWERS that best describe you and fill in the blanks where required.

28. ETHNIC GROUP - White Indian Pakistani Chinese Other_____

29. LENGTH OF TIME AS A LONE PARENT - _____ years _____ months

30. DO YOU HAVE A TELEPHONE? - yes no

31. DO YOU BELONG TO ANY ONE PARENT GROUPS ? - yes no

32. CHILDCARE CIRCLE THE NUMBERS that indicate what form of childcare you currently use

	MOTHER/MOTHER IN LAW	OTHER RELATIVE	FRIEND/NEIGHBOUR	OTHER PARENT	CURRENT PARTNER	OLDER AFTER YOUNGER	CHILD MINDER	COUNCIL NURSERY	PRIVATE NURSERY		NONE USED
a) your MAIN form of childcare (CIRCLE ONE)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Other_____	10
b) all other forms of childcare that you use	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Other_____	10

----------THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE----------

Appendix 6
Partnered Parent Quality Of Life Questionnaire
(70% reduction)

PART 1 : QUALITY OF LIFE

PLEASE CIRCLE THE NUMBER that indicates how **important** each factor is TO YOU. The higher the number, the more important it is in influencing the quality of YOUR life

HOW IMPORTANT ...	NOT IMPORTANT	OF LIMITED IMPORTANCE	QUITE IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
1. The housing conditions you live in	1	2	3	4	5
2. The street that you live in	1	2	3	4	5
3. That you are safe from crime	1	2	3	4	5
4. Your family life	1	2	3	4	5
5. Your state of health	1	2	3	4	5
6. Your financial situation	1	2	3	4	5
7. That you are satisfied with the work that you do	1	2	3	4	5
8. You get opportunities for leisure/recreation	1	2	3	4	5
9. That adequate transportation is available to you	1	2	3	4	5
10. That the services you need are available locally	1	2	3	4	5
11. That advice and support are available to you	1	2	3	4	5
12. What other people think of you	1	2	3	4	5
13. That you have the opportunity to "better yourself"	1	2	3	4	5
14. You are able to control your own life	1	2	3	4	5

Please indicate how **satisfied** you are with the following aspects of YOUR life. PLEASE CIRCLE THE NUMBER that indicates YOUR LEVEL of satisfaction.

HOW SATISFIED are you with ...	VERY DISSATISFIED			MIXED FEELINGS			VERY SATISFIED	DON'T KNOW/DOESN'T APPLY
15. The physical condition of your house/flat	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
16. The relationship you have with your neighbours	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
17. The relationship you have with your children	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
18. Support provided by your family who live locally	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
19. (if in employment) The conditions of your employment	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
(if not in employment) Your employment prospects	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
20. Amount of spare-time you have to yourself	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
21. The range of community groups in your area	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
22. Provision of local childcare facilities	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X

PART 2 : SOURCES OF SUPPORT Listed below and overleaf are six problems that could happen to anyone. For each 'problem', list;

- **WHO** you would first turn to for help
- **HOW LONG** it would take you to travel to this source of help.

... and repeat for who you would next turn to for help.

	FIRST SOURCE OF HELP	TRAVEL TIME	SECOND SOURCE	TRAVEL TIME
23. Household Jobs (e.g. moving furniture)	_____	_____	_____	_____
24. When you are ill	_____	_____	_____	_____
25. Borrowing money	_____	_____	_____	_____

(70% reduction)

	FIRST SOURCE OF HELP	TRAVEL TIME	SECOND SOURCE	TRAVEL TIME
26. Feeling depressed	_____	_____	_____	_____
27. Problems with children	_____	_____	_____	_____
28. Problems with spouse/partner	_____	_____	_____	_____

PART 3 : ABOUT YOURSELF Please CIRCLE THE ANSWERS that best describe you and fill in the blanks where required.

29. AGE - **teenager** **20-24** **25-29** **30-34** **35-39** **40-44** **45-49** **49-54** **55-59** **over 59**

30. SEX - **male** **female**

31. CURRENT STATUS - **married** **live with partner** **don't live with partner** **no partner**

32. CHILDREN - a) Do you have any children of your own ? **yes** (go to Q32b) **no** (go to Q33)

b) How old are each of your children ? - ____ ____ ____ ____ ____

c) How many of your children currently live with you ? - **all** **none** **some**

33. EMPLOYMENT - Are you? **in paid employment** (go to Q34) **not seeking employment** (go to Q35)

out of work (go to Q35) **Other** (specify) _____ (go to Q34)

34. ABOUT 'WORK' - a) What do you do? _____

b) Do you supervise any staff in your job? - **yes** **no**

35. EDUCATION - a) Do you have any educational qualifications? - **yes** (go to Q35b) **no** (go to Q36)

- b) Please describe the highest level you have attained _____

36. HOUSING - a) Is the house/flat you are living in? **Owner-Occupied** **Council House** **Housing Co-op**

Private Rented **Housing Association** **Other** (specify) _____

38. DO YOU HAVE A TELEPHONE? - **yes** **no**

39. CHILDCARE CIRCLE THE NUMBERS that indicate who watches your children when you are not at home.

	OTHER PARENT	MOTHER/MOTHER IN LAW	OTHER RELATIVE	FRIEND/NEIGHBOUR	CURRENT PARTNER	OLDER AFTER YOUNGER	CHILD MINDER	COUNCIL NURSERY	PRIVATE NURSERY		NONE USED
a) YOUR MAIN form of childcare (TICK ONE)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Other_____	10
b) all other forms of childcare that YOU use	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Other_____	10

Please compare yourself with other people. CIRCLE THE NUMBER which says how you compare against the average person for the following life roles

		WAY BELOW AVERAGE			AVERAGE		WAY ABOVE AVERAGE		DON'T KNOW/DOESN'T APPLY
39. as a PARENT	are you..	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
40. as a FRIEND	are you..	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
41. as a MONEY MANAGER	are you..	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
42. as a HOUSEKEEPER	are you..	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
43. as a FIT/HEALTHY PERSON	are you..	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
44. as a EMPLOYEE/VOLUNTARY WORKER/STUDENT	are you..	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X
45. as a PARTNER/SPOUSE	are you..	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	X

----------THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE----------

Appendix 7
Cover Letter For Quality Of Life Questionnaires
(70% reduction)

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY & TOPOGRAPHIC SCIENCE

Professor I. B. Thompson (Head of Department)
Professor G. Petrie

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW, GLASGOW, G12 8QQ
Telephone 041-339-8855 Ext. 6653
Telex. 777070 UNIGLA / 778421 GLASUL
Fax 041-330-4894

BRINGING UP CHILDREN ON YOUR OWN?

Could you spare 20 minutes to help others?

My name is John McKendrick and I am a researcher at the University of Glasgow. An independent research council has funded me to study the 'quality of life' of single parents in Scotland. The study aims to provide information on what is important to lone parents. **The information received will be used by one-parent groups and policy-makers to improve conditions for those bringing up children on their own.**

I would be grateful if you could complete this questionnaire. This has been sent to 800 single parents in Strathclyde region. The questionnaire will only take between 10 & 20 minutes to complete. **You are not required to give your name or address and a stamped envelope has been provided for you to return the completed questionnaire.**

If having read this you do not wish to complete the questionnaire, please return it to its holder to give someone else a chance to do so.

If you are completing the questionnaire, I would be grateful if you could return it to me by the end of December (or January 1992 at the latest). Thank you very much for your help.

John McKendrick (Glasgow University)

39, HOPE STREET,
GLASGOW, G3 7DW.
PHONE: 041 248 6840.

REGISTERED CHARITY Nº
ED 269/85

THE ASSOCIATION FOR LONE

EAST END GINGERBREAD

My name is John McKendrick and I am a researcher at the University of Glasgow. An independent research council has funded me to study the 'quality of life' of single parents in Scotland. The study aims to provide information on what is important to lone parents. **The information received will be used by Gingerbread, other one-parent groups and policy-makers to improve conditions for those bringing up children on their own.**

I am collecting this information by sending a questionnaire to 800 single parents in Strathclyde region. This questionnaire takes between 10 & 20 minutes to complete. **Respondents are not required to give their name or address.**

I am writing to ask if each member of your group would consider completing one of these questionnaires. Gingerbread groups from Paisley, Dougrie and Irvine have already taken part. I have enclosed 30 of these questionnaires for your group. Each one comes with a letter explaining what the questionnaire is for and a stamped envelope to post it back to me. If I have not supplied enough questionnaires, or if you have any questions you would like to ask, please contact either Karen Willey , at Gingerbread Head Office or myself at 041-339-8855 extention 6653 (or use one of the S.A.E.)

I would be grateful if the questionnaires were returned to me by January 1992 (or the end of December '91 if you can manage it). Thank you very much for your help.

John McKendrick (Glasgow University)

UNIVERSITY
of
GLASGOW

Dear Sir or Madam,

ARE YOU THE PARENT OF A CHILD AGED 18 YEARS OR LESS?

If you are....

CAN WE ASK YOU ABOUT THE QUALITY OF YOUR LIFE?
The Applied Population Research Unit of the University of Glasgow are surveying this for people in your area.
For example, we are considering if 'satisfaction' with various aspects of life (house, neighbourhood etc) varies between different types of family (for example, between one parent and two parent families).

WHY WERE YOU SENT THIS LETTER?
Your house was selected at random from a list of addresses in your area.
We would like to know the opinions of people in your area.

WHY SHOULD YOU BECOME INVOLVED?
Little is known about the differences between types of families.
Your views, as part of the survey, will be part of use to policy-makers working in this field.
Your views will be valuable to us whatever type of family you are part of.

WILL IT BE CONFIDENTIAL?
All answers given in this survey will be entirely confidential.

HOW CAN YOU BECOME INVOLVED?
A researcher will be visiting your area within the next two weeks.
If you would like to participate, please contact us to arrange a suitable date for us to call.
You will be asked to complete a short questionnaire. The questionnaire takes 15 minutes to complete. Please contact;

Evenings/Weekends		During Office Hours
"FAMILY SURVEY" on 0294 602621	OR	"FAMILY SURVEY" on 041-339-8855 (and ask for extension 6653)

or write to "FAMILY SURVEY"
A.P.R.U.
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY
UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW
G12 8QQ.

Thanking you in anticipation,

John McKendrick

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